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THE SECOND FRONT IN THE COLD WAR

THE sharp Soviet Note to Persia is a clear enough indication that the Russians intend to open up the Middle East as a second front in the cold war. In Western Europe the fortified positions of democracy are strong; the defenders can be sure that Russian ideology has little appeal in their countries, and they can reckon on extensive American aid. What more natural, therefore, than that Stalin should launch an outflanking movement in an area where imperialism, in the strictly Leninist sense, is the dominant factor, where social revolution is the pre-condition of any real liberty for the masses? A Russian victory in the Middle East could make nonsense of the Marshall Plan, and by depriving the Western Powers of essential oil supplies, swing the balance of military strength once again in favour of the Soviet Union.

In the face of this threat, Mr. Bevin has gone back on his first famous directive, which laid down a policy of economic reconstruction designed to free the fellaheen from their fearsome exploitation. He has accepted the advice of those Middle Eastern experts who contend that the only way to keep the Russians out is to collaborate with those cliques in the Arab world which are so frightened of social revolution that they will do a deal with any Westerner who will buy their oil and sell them arms. Strategy, these experts contend, must determine our policy. Vast capital will be required to bring to the fellaheen the blessings of the West, and to steer the nationalist movements into constructive channels. But we have neither time nor money. The enemy is at the gates. We must make do with the allies we already possess, even if in so doing we prop up an intolerable social system and connive at the Arab League's defiance of Uno.

It would be too easy to dismiss this policy simply because it violates Mr. Bevin's own directive and the principles of democratic Socialism. Necessity is a hard task-master; and, as the Foreign Secretary has reminded us, the Middle East is a vital British interest. A more pertinent question is whether the abandonment of a Socialist policy has proved effective. Is the Middle East to-day able to withstand the combination of power politics and political warfare which the Russians will bring against it? Has the policy of appeasing the Arab League paid any better when practised by a Labour Foreign Secretary than it did when Lord Halifax was at the Foreign Office?

Recent events in Iraq give the answer. Even more passionately than in the case of Egypt last year, the small politically conscious class which composes public opinion in Baghdad has repudiated as a sell-out a treaty which would involve Iraq in any conflict between Britain and Russia. Just as the Arab world was indifferent in the war against Germany, so it is indifferent in the present struggle. What it desires with passion is to be rid of that foreign exploitation of which the British soldier and, ironically enough, the Jewish settler, are the detested symbols. It wants to stand outside the ring until the last moment, and to back the winning side.

The more colourfully our diplomats portray the Bolshevik bogy, the more violently Arab politicians are condemned as reactionary traitors if they show themselves ready to "sell out" to the British. In Western Europe we are "defending our own cherished liberties." In the Middle East we are demanding of the Arab nationalists that they should postpone the overthrow of a corrupt system in order to assure our oil supplies. Is it surprising that their response is unenthusiastic?

Mr. Bevin's realism about Palestine has done nothing to improve the situation. It has made war certain in Palestine, without winning Arab friendship. The Arab feels not gratitude but contempt for a great Power which abdicates and remains neutral on an issue of principle. Sensing weakness, he raises his demands for Danegeld. A great Power can only retain leadership in the Middle East if it displays greatness; and in Arab eyes at least integrity and respect for principle are an essential element in greatness.

But can we not at least claim that by involving America we have backed our waning authority with a powerful force? Certainly the U.S.A. has taken over the management of Persia along with that of Greece and Turkey; and, in the event of war, American armies would no doubt liberate the Arabs from Russian occupation. But in the cold war of diplomacy, intrigue and propaganda, with Jewish votes set against the oil "lobby," a double-faced American policy—and double-faced it must always remain—is a doubtful ally in winning Arab support. By achieving economic ascendancy, America has weakened our prestige; and by its activities in Persia the State Department has certainly sharpened the tension and given Russia a powerful case.

These are dubious advantages and they have been gained at a heavy price. If the Middle East becomes a second front in the cold war, it will be a most dangerous liability. It is time that the Foreign Secretary took his first directive out of the pigeon-hole and realised that Socialist principles may sometimes be expedient, too.

The Pound and the Franc

The necessity for the steps which the Treasury has taken to restrict the use by French nationals of sterling credits in London is sufficiently explained by the fact that the opening of M. Mayer's free exchange market in Paris has resulted in a "cross-rate" valuation of the pound at 2.80 dollars. This rate, of course, is in no sense an accurate reflection of the pound's purchasing power; indeed, as Mr. R. G. Hawtrey pointed out in a broadcast last week-end, on a comparison of prices in Britain and the U.S.A. the pound might well be quoted at substantially over 4 dollars. The danger of this artificial valuation in Paris based on dollar scarcity is that French speculators might use the free market to develop an entrepôt trade in British Empire produce which would otherwise earn dollars for the sterling area. This undesirable development, it is hoped, will be averted by the tightened Franco-British control of French sterling balances. Meanwhile, the temporary freezing of 5,000-franc notes in France—a step on which the Socialists appear to have insisted as the price for their acceptance of the free exchange market plan—has produced inevitably a widespread dislocation of business. How far the freezing is to be accompanied by confiscation of large hoards of currency is not yet clear. Presumably, in the case of all small holdings and those in which there is no proof of Black Market profits, the cancelled notes will eventually be exchanged for new currency at their full value; but fears of partial confiscation have led to the sale of 5,000-franc notes at a 50 per cent. discount. It remains to be seen whether the uncovering of hoards is worth the loss of confidence in the currency which the operation must have caused—particularly among the peasants on whose willingness to deliver foodstuffs economic stability in France depends.

Towards Agreement on Austria?

On the face of it, the new Russian compromise proposals with regard to Austrian reparations should make Four-Power agreement on an Austrian peace treaty easier. Scaling down their claims by 400 million dollars, the Russians now offer to hand back the vast majority of the enterprises which they seized as "German assets" in return for 200 million dollars payable over a two-year period. They also demand control, for fifty years, of two-thirds of the Zistersdorf oilfield and a 25 per cent. participation in the Danube Shipping Company. Comment in the U.S. press, however, has tended to represent these not ungenerous Russian proposals as "economic blackmail"; and it is particularly objected that the Austrians would have to utilise "Marshall aid" dollars for the reparations in cash. Indications are, in fact, that the Austrians may be persuaded by Washington and London to reject the offer on the ground that Russian interference with Austrian oil exploitation is inconsistent with Austrian sovereignty. The question asked by cynics in Vienna is whether any of the Powers is really prepared to evacuate its forces from Austria.

Trade Unionism at Loggerheads

The World Federation of Trade Unions has not broken yet; but if the French C.G.T. goes to its forthcoming meeting with a demand that the Marshall Plan shall be either condemned or not discussed at all, it is not easy to see how a breakdown can be avoided. The story that the Trades Union Congress General Council has been negotiating behind the W.F.T.U.'s back for a new Trade Union International sponsored jointly by the T.U.C. and the A.F. of L. can safely be dismissed as nonsense, whatever indiscreet remarks a Foreign Office official may have made off the record in talking to the A.F. of L. leaders. The General Council does not run its negotiations about international Trade Unions either through the Foreign Office or even through Mr. Bevin, whatever Moscow may suppose. It is, of course, a well-authenticated fact that the A.F. of L. would like to break the W.F.T.U. and to replace it by a new anti-Communist International. But there has been no British response to their overtures; nor is the C.I.O. in any way a party to them. The C.I.O. is insistent that Marshall aid must be discussed at the W.F.T.U. meeting, but that is quite another matter. It will be a great pity if the W.F.T.U. does break up, for it may be needed again before long in order to help in keeping up economic relations between East and West. The best solution would be to put it practically into cold storage for the time being, on the understanding that the Trade Unions in the Marshall Plan countries are left full freedom to meet for discussion of their common problem. The snag there is the French split; for would the C.G.T. come if the *Force Ouvrière* were invited, too? And could the W.F.T.U. hold together if the Western Trade Unions went ahead with the *Force Ouvrière* in the absence of the C.G.T.—with or without the Americans?

The Gas Bill

The Gas Bill, which comes up for second reading next week, provides for a greater degree of decentralisation than the earlier nationalisation Bills. The administrative executives are to be twelve Area Boards, linked federally in a Gas Council composed of the Area Board chairmen, with an independent chairman. The Council is to act largely as adviser to the Minister, and has no executive functions except power to manufacture plant and fittings. Its main function will be to advise and assist the Area Boards in the operation and development of the gas industry; but it can only act on behalf of the Boards if so requested, and only direct them when they are in financial default. Further, the Minister can give directions direct to the Area Boards. Financially, the Area Boards are to be autonomous; they, and not the Gas Council, become responsible for the interest and capital charges on the Treasury Guaranteed stock given as compensation to the acquired gas companies and municipalities. This means that to a certain extent the unequal financial burden borne by consumers will be perpetuated. There will be inequality of charges as between the different areas, due to the uneven capital burden. The only mitigation is a fund of £5 millions to be contributed by the Boards and held by the Gas Council, but it is to be used for meeting financial default only. The Minister appears to have accepted financial standards as the test of success, as there is no provision for ensuring the efficiency of the industry. Experience in nationalisation to date indicates that excessive centralisation of administration tends to establish bureaucracy and inefficiency. On the other hand, financial centralisation, as provided for coal and transport, is desirable. Inasmuch as the proposals for the nationalised gas monopoly provide for decentralisation administratively they are progressive, but to the extent that decentralisation is carried through financially they are open to criticism.

Devolution and Scotland

The Government is wise in making concessions to Scottish national sentiment. The sentiment, as distinct from the Movement, is strong and shared by all parties, and bears no relation to lost Nationalist election deposits. Nor must it be confused with kilt-swinging, white cockade romanticism or Jacobite irredentism. It is based on legitimate grievances and a sense of economic neglect. Noticeably, among its strongest exponents are ex-Scottish Secretaries, like Tom Johnston and Walter Elliot. The Labour Party, by past promises, is committed to a substantial measure of devolution and the latest White Paper "Scottish Affairs" is an earnest of good intentions. It acknowledges the need for Scottish people to have a larger say in their own concerns. Under its dispensation, unless there is opposition from more than ten members, Scottish Bills will be referred without debate to the Scottish Standing Committee for consideration in principle. This will be accepted as Second Reading. These Bills will include those of purely Scottish interest for which Parliamentary time cannot be found under present arrangements. On Scottish Estimates, the Standing Committee, with a limitation of six days' debate, will discuss and formally refer back to the Committee of Supply. The White Paper also establishes a Scottish Economic Conference under the chairmanship of the Secretary of State, which will consider development, industry and commerce generally. Another, under Tom Johnston, will be concerned with nationalised industries in their relation to Scotland. A third will advise on the "devolved" Government Departments which now include not only health, agriculture and education (vested in the Secretary of State) but Scottish departments of the Admiralty, Board of Trade, Civil Aviation, Labour, Supply and Works. Those who want Customs posts along the Border, a Scottish Secretary for External Affairs and so on will not be satisfied, but the plan goes a considerable way to meet most reasonable aspirations. The Government might make a further gesture which would give a great deal of satisfaction to the Scots—let the Scottish Standing Committee meet in Edinburgh.

PARLIAMENT: Compromises

Wednesday

On Monday, the Lords played Twenty Questions. The team included Lord Salisbury, Lord Samuel, Lord Lloyd, Lord Cecil and Lord Swinton; Question Master, the Lord Privy Seal, Lord Addison. The first Object was the Government Statement on the Conference on the Powers and Composition of the Lords, which the Opposition had proposed. In paraphrase, the discussion went something like this:

A Noble Lord (suspiciously): It's a trick.
Lord Addison (briefly): No, it's not a trick.
Another Noble Lord: It's a compromise.
Lord Addison: M'yes. It could be.
Yet another Noble Lord: Abstract or concrete?
Lord Addison (definitely): Both.

Before the day was out, the mystification had grown too much for their lordships, and Lord Lloyd said that for all he could understand of the Government's statement it might have been in Amharic.

The chief difficulty in the way of mutual understanding was that both Government and Opposition wanted a compromise on their own terms. The Government was prepared to have a Conference to discuss the composition of the Lords, but not if it meant forfeiting the Parliament Bill, with its curb on the Lords' power of delay. The Lords were willing to reform, provided they could delay. From time to time, a spasmodic debate interrupted their Lordships' Questions. Lord Cecil warned the country against single Chamber rule at a time when Members of Parliament had lost much of their independence to the encroaching Executive. He also defended the value of a hereditary Chamber, though without mentioning that most members of the Lords are New Men, or the sons of New Men of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The first Baron, Lord Altrincham, agreed that that "the great thing is to retain the hereditary principle."

On the whole, there was little disagreement that eligibility for the Lords needed some modification, if it were to remain an effective revising Chamber. Lord Calverley, who was Mr. Muff until quite recently, made an original speech which established, once and for all, that to reform the Lords, it isn't enough to create new peers. Into the apprehensions and doubts of the assembly, Lord Stansgate brought reassurance. He described the Bill, in supporting it, as the "House of Lords Protection Bill," with special reference to the leaders of the Conservative Party.

In the Commons, Arthur Bottomley, the Secretary for Overseas Trade, was unhappily burdened in his first important speech with the complex and ponderous details of the Geneva Tariff. These were stones in his sermon which prevented his lively spirit from leaving the text. Even so, he gave the House the general impression that the Geneva structure was as delicately poised, as intricate in constitution and in symmetry, as satisfying as a house of cards. Pull one tariff away, and the interdependent structure flops.

Lyttelton was quick to point out that the Marshall Plan is incompatible with the doctrine of multilateralism and non-discrimination. Mackay and Boothby easily established that the form of trade which served Britain well in the nineteenth century (and which some Americans think might serve the U.S.A. to-day) is ill-adapted to our present needs, and inconsistent with the idea of Western Union. Both Mackay and Boothby tore the Geneva Agreement into tatters; but the flaw of both their speeches was that neither gave a short-term economic alternative.

The best Tory speech, supporting the Agreement, came from Peter Thorneycroft. He took the opportunity of shrugging off Lord Beaverbrook, who, he said, had weakened the case for Imperial Preference by overstating it. He also revealed a new and interesting line of thought in the Tory mind—the idea that the Government is blameworthy for not attracting American capital to Britain.

Harold Wilson wound up with the consoling statement that if we have a balance-of-payments difficulty up to 1952, we are permitted by the Agreement to try to overcome it by discrimination. It is a curious thought that if by 1952 discrimination will have helped us to survive our troubles, our further right to survive them by discrimination will automatically cease.

MAURICE EDELMAN

THE TRAGEDY IN DELHI

It is too soon yet to assess the political effects of the assassination of the Mahatma. As I write, all that is clear about his murderer is that he was a member of the R.S.S.—an activist off-shoot of the Hindu Mahasabha—whose national membership and leadership are semi-secret. Gandhi himself was well aware that his life was in danger and that there was a plot to remove him and perhaps other political leaders who are striving for communal peace. Two days before his death he told one of his intimate friends that, if he were assassinated, it would probably be at his daily prayer meeting.

The immediate effect of the murder is naturally a revulsion of feeling against the R.S.S. and the Mahasabha. Nehru, who has insisted that India must be built as a democracy which gives freedom to minorities, condemned these extremist bodies the other day, naming the R.S.S. among others. But Sardar Patel, the powerful figure who controls the Congress machine, has spoken tenderly about the R.S.S. It is improbable that he approves of all its activities, and he would presumably repudiate some of its doctrines. I have in front of me an article from a newspaper, *The Organiser*, which might have been written by Rosenberg. It describes this uniformed organisation, built on military lines, in mystic terms. It is, of course, to be Hindu and racially pure, and is to extol the "heroic days of the ancestors." Knowledge of its doctrine is only to be obtained by absorption in its spirit; "the minds of millions are attuned to this one pitch," and its members are to learn discipline and to develop "righteous heroism." The fanatics were roused to fury by Gandhi's recent fast directed towards communal peace, and his assassination was the result.

This fanaticism is loathsome to the great mass of Indians since Gandhi's death. Now is the moment to discredit and disband the R.S.S., while popular feeling is roused against it. Much depends on the attitude of Patel, who shares to a large degree the communal outlook of the Mahasabha but who may now regard the R.S.S. as a dangerous and uncontrollable force—even if one which might at some later stage serve his purpose. Another figure whose reactions to Gandhi's murder may be important is Baldev Singh, the Sikh Minister of Defence. He is regarded by many Sikhs as suspiciously moderate; but he controls the army, and the army dislikes the indiscipline and violence of the R.S.S.

The removal of the unique and beneficent personality of the Mahatma from Indian politics is likely in the long run to weaken the forces of peace and moderation. Nehru is even more isolated than before in a Cabinet which represents chiefly Indian Big Business. The Socialist Party, led by that attractive and impressive personality Jai Prakash Narain, is expected to leave Congress at its Conference in Bombay next month. The Communist Party, probably the best organised in India, is, of course, an open enemy of Congress, and is in head-on collision with the Socialist leaders. The Communists still insist in their propaganda that British imperialism dominates India, and in particular they are now attacking, as reactionary, the remarkably speedy settlement that Patel is making with the Princes. Like the Socialists, but more effectively, they appeal to the workers to unite on an economic basis, and to think in class, not communal, terms. To them, the political significance of Gandhi's death will be that it will now be much easier to analyse and align the social forces of India in Marxist terms. Gandhi represented an incalculable and personal factor, sometimes exerted on the side of social progress, and sometimes, as in the case of the recent decontrol of some essential commodities, on the side of Big Business and reaction.

In Delhi to-day one is conscious mainly of the staggering fact that Gandhi is dead. The crowd at his funeral was probably as great as any that has ever gathered together in human history. In the middle of the turmoil the bier arrived. I had seen it start from Birla House in the morning, with Nehru and Baldev Singh sitting by the body. It was piled high amidst flowers and garlands on an army truck and pulled by hundreds of willing hands. It was a strange and moving sight to see the body placed on the sandal-wood faggots with incense, while the women who had worked most closely with Gandhiji keened and chanted around his body. His calm and familiar face was uncovered except where rose petals fell upon it. The crowd did not show the religious emotion I had expected, but it was good-natured and gentle. Its mood was hard to define. People had scarcely realised the significance of Gandhi's death until they saw his body on the pyre.

I had myself talked to the Mahatma a few days before. All string and bone, he looked wonderfully fit after his fast. Indeed he seemed scarcely to have changed since I first met him at the Round Table Conference in what now seems a previous incarnation. We talked of Ahimsa, and he explained that his doctrine had never changed, but that he had discovered to his sorrow that passive resistance designed to dislodge the British from India had been merely the weapon of the weak, and not the genuine Ahimsa which relies only on truth, love and sacrifice. I asked him how Ahimsa, which was clearly powerful when used to influence an Occupying Power, could be employed by the Government which took its place. He replied that he believed it to be possible for the Government to use Ahimsa, and quoted Tolstoy's story *Ivan the Fool*. He held that Sheikh Abdullah could have used Ahimsa in Kashmir if he had believed in it. He himself guaranteed that he could have used Ahimsa successfully against the tribesmen. Then, characteristically, he left doctrine aside. Since governments did not believe in Ahimsa, he was prepared to give political advice. This had always been his method. He would state a moral principle, and refuse to embark on a discussion of possible compromises in which the principle might be lost sight of. But if obstacles to a direct application of his moral principle were insuperable, he would turn away at right angles, as it were, and begin the discussion again on a matter-of-fact plane. Not having lost his bearings by tacking his sails, he could always start again on the true course.

The Mahatma exercised influence of two kinds. He was the Guru, adviser and consoler, not only of Nehru but of many politicians of different political views. All of them speak of him in terms of reverence, and few important political decisions have been made in recent years in India that have not borne the stamp of his astute and experienced advice. The second type of power which he exerted was upon the masses of India. It was most spectacularly demonstrated in his fifteen fasts. These were of various types—some for limited periods and limited objectives, and some "to the death." In some, he drank citrus juice which would enable him to live longer, and in some, as in the last case, he refused even this. Sometimes, as in his fast designed to persuade Ambedkar and the Untouchables, his fast amounted to a highly effective form of coercion, since the result of refusing to be persuaded would have been disastrous for the recalcitrant. One can usually find some material factor that worked on his side. But that is irrelevant, since without the fast the result would not have been attained.

Probably his most remarkable success was in August—the fast which ended communal rioting in Bengal. This he could fairly claim as a genuine victory for Ahimsa. His recent Delhi fast was successful, but less miraculous in its effect. By fasting he persuaded the Government of India to pay fifty-five crores of rupees which were admittedly owed to Pakistan and withheld because Patel and others thought it absurd to hand over money to a Power which would use it to make war against India. Gandhi gave up this fast when he was satisfied with the promises of the leaders of all parties that they would seek communal peace and, in particular, when they had agreed to certain conditions for achieving communal peace in Delhi. One of these was that the great annual communal Muslim pilgrimage to the sacred tomb at Mehrauli should take place in conditions of security for the Muslims. I went to Mehrauli on the first day of these celebrations to see how far this condition was obeyed. The roads were policed with armed guards. Lorries were provided for the Muslims. At first only scouting parties arrived to test the degree of security. One Muslim, who was clearly suffering from shock and had lost relatives in a massacre, showed me the damage that had been done to the tomb and its surroundings by Hindus. He declared that, in protecting this Muslim celebration, the Government was merely putting on a propaganda act to help their case over Kashmir. On the first day only a few hundred Muslims arrived; but on the next morning, when Gandhi himself came to hold a prayer meeting at the tomb, some four thousand Muslims were present. This was at least a measure of success for Ahimsa. Muslims now dare to walk about alone in Delhi—at least in dayight.

Gandhi had planned to go shortly to Pakistan. He would not claim that his Delhi fast had more than temporarily improved the atmosphere in which the situation in Kashmir is being discussed. On this issue, dominant and most menacing for this sub-continent, the Mahatma's influence in his lifetime might still have been decisive. There must be millions to-day who wonder whether his spirit, now that he is dead, will be as potent for peace as it was during his lifetime. My own guess is that his murderers have strengthened the cause of peace for the moment, but sadly weakened it in the longer run. My most enduring memory of Gandhi will not be the sight of his body on the funeral pyre, macabre and unforgettable though that was, but rather the picture of the living Gandhi I saw at Mehrauli, seated on the platform with an audience of eager and reverent Muslims before him, listening while he quietly explained that the India of the future must contain no communal strife, and that his life and if necessary his death were offered as a sacrifice to the cause of communal friendship.

New Delhi. KINGSLEY MARTIN

SAINT IN POLITICS

It was hot and sticky that evening in Madras at the beginning of 1946. The bustle of the great camp, thronged with hundreds of white figures moving quickly through the dark and speaking with excited voices, may have confused us. The rambling discourse delivered by the Mahatma from the veranda floor of the house in the centre of the camp, as we sat uncomfortably shifting on our chairs in a semi-circle around him, had lasted nearly two hours. It had not helped to clear our minds. There had been wit and flashes of penetration; but when we, as members of a British Parliamentary delegation, pressed for practical suggestions on the course our Government should follow, the only advice we got was "Get off our backs," with no indication as to how it was to be done. Suddenly, thinking that the interview had gone on long enough, Bob Richards, the leader of the delegation, leaned forward in his chair. In his careful, slow Welsh voice he began: "Well, Mr. Jinnah . . ." For one horrified instant we sat transfixed in our chairs looking helplessly at Gandhi. Then he took us out of our misery with a high-pitched "He! He! He! You flatter me," and laughed for several minutes.

At that first meeting we were baffled. It seemed impossible to settle anything with such a man. Some of us went to see him alone to plead for a common-sense approach. Then he relented, and it appeared that the first audience was a try-out to test our sincerity. He was not going to waste his time discussing the problems of India with anyone until he was convinced that that person genuinely wanted to help and to do what was right. His life was a symbol, and he demanded symbols from others.

It is easy enough to describe his simplicity, his asceticism, his days of silence and his fasts as play-acting; and many British administrators did so, perhaps rightly from their standpoint. To travel third-class in India is a nightmare experienced against a background of wooden seats and crammed carriages of inferno heat. If that was the way India's millions had to make a journey, Gandhi would go third-class, too. But his train was a special one. His coach contained only himself and his immediate entourage. Each trip cost the Government of India £100 or more; and he would solemnly tender the third-class fare for it, so as not to be beholden to the British.

His food was the same as that of the peasants, but he ate much more than they did, or he would not have retained his health and vigour. His days of silence seemed sometimes to Europeans to be conducted with an eye more on their political effect than on their religious value. At one delicate moment during the Cabinet Mission negotiations he was asked to visit the Cabinet Ministers at their residence early one morning. Sitting perched up, with his legs crossed, on the sofa, he listened patiently to their suggestions. After a time he gravely began to hand them little bits of paper on which were written slogans, to which there was no answer, such as "He who gives quickly gives twice." At the same period he had announced that, as an example to India, he would live in the sweepers' quarters whilst the Cabinet Mission was in Delhi. But his followers erected marquees, and cleaned and whitewashed the area so effectively that none of its former miserable inhabitants would have recognized it. His fasts occasionally laid themselves open to criticism from the British because he never undertook a fast "to death" when he was in their hands. The risk, it was said, that they might not release him was too great. But that did not diminish their genuineness, and Indians knew that they were a symbol of passive resistance. When it was Indians that he sought to influence, he did not hesitate to embark on fasts which would not end until the purpose he aimed at had been achieved.

His defects by Western standards were not defects at all in India. His position was understood perfectly. His was the demonstration to the masses that one man at least among their leaders was beyond corruption, free from material chains, and identifying himself so far as it was humanly possible with their lives. He represented their hopes and fears articulately when they could only feel them vaguely. Non-violence was aimed at bringing out the best in India. Gandhi knew that the Indian character when it turns to violence can be as ugly as that of any nation in the world.

He was fortified in his policy by a belief that the British sense of justice could ultimately be made by persuasion to concede freedom to India. His British detractors were disposed to think him England's enemy. But for Britain, her institutions, her soldiers and her culture he had a great respect. One day I put it to him that it would be a sad mistake on the part of Congress to think that, if negotiations with the British broke down, they could start an uprising and throw us out by force.

"Yes," he replied, "if we were to start a rising, I should hate to think that the British were no longer tough enough to deal with it. It would be your duty to suppress it, and I hope you would." Even his non-violence was an ideal which, however hard he strove to propagate, he realised was unlikely to have universal application. He always accepted it as a strong possibility that, after the British left, it might be God's will that there should be a civil war. "In that event," I said to him, "you will tell Congress to adopt the policy of non-violence. But the Muslim League won't be impressed by that, and they will become the masters of India."

"Yes," he said, "I should certainly urge Congress to pursue the course of non-violence—but I shouldn't expect them to." That was typical of so many of his utterances which to the Westerner had a faintly dishonest flavour. But there was no dishonesty or real inconsistency in his make-up. The drawback was more that he so faithfully and accurately mirrored the tortuousness and simplicity of the Indian mind. When he said "I would rather trust a man and be deceived than distrust him," he meant it. It was not his fault if some foolish people thought that implied he would not get the better of them in argument, and were shocked when he did. Never consciously did he do or advocate anything that was wrong or untrue. In some respects his conscience was similar to that of old Nonconformist England. That, no doubt, was the reason why Sankey and Moody hymns (and he was distressed that they had lost their former popularity in England) made so strong an appeal to him, together with the non-ceremonial aspects of Christianity. His celebrated Prayer Meetings were a mixture of every creed, and through them he sought to release the best in Hinduism. In that he succeeded, as he succeeded triumphantly, against misunderstanding, in carrying his religious beliefs into the realm of practical affairs.

He was sometimes accused of a pride that was completely absent from him. In India, when two great men meet, the one at whose house the meeting takes place is reputed to gain prestige and the other to lose it. Yet he never demurred from travelling to see Jinnah at Bombay, nor did he ever fail to compel in himself an attitude of absolute humility towards every problem. At a time when Jinnah was saying, during the Cabinet Mission's stay, that further discussions were useless, Gandhi gave out his policy privately. "Make me Viceroy for twenty-four hours and I would settle everything. I would go and call on Mr. Jinnah at his house and ask to see him. If they told me he was in his bath and I would have to wait for three-quarters of an hour, I would wait. If they told me when he had finished his bath that he was still busy, I would still wait. I would go on waiting until he saw me and we would reach a compromise."

Mistakes or, as he called them, "Himalayan blunders," he certainly made. If he had chosen to accept the Cabinet Mission plan in the spirit and not to dispute the letter with a lawyer's mind, although as he remarked, pointing at his head, "a very aged one," partition might have been avoided. But it was hard for him to accept principles he had fought against all his life, particularly those which tended to weaken the unity of India. In his last months it seemed that he had accepted that partition, however reluctantly, and was working desperately and magnificently to heal the fissures. Never, since the days when the Muslim League first began to attract mass support, had he been so revered by the Muslims. He would have been happy that his death is mourned by them equally with the Hindus. He was a full man in whom perfection had come near to vanquishing imperfection, without destroying his charm, his humour or the things that made him lovable. He did not claim to be a saint, but he had a better right to the title than many who have passed the test at Rome.

WOODROW WYATT

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE UNIONS

THE Prime Minister's statement on wages and profits contained both an appeal and a warning. The appeal was that both sides of industry should make the full employment policy work by voluntary self-discipline. The warning was quite simply that, if this self-discipline is not displayed during the next six months, the Government will be faced with the grim alternatives of either striking at the structure of collective bargaining or drifting into economic disaster.

In one country after another, including not only France, but the U.S.A., the dams against inflation have burst. Up till now, Britain has succeeded better than any other nation in damming the pressure. But during the last nine months the water has begun to trickle through at an ever-increasing pace. Already the substantial gains in real wages achieved by the working class between 1939 and 1947 are being overtaken by rising prices. Wage increases are defeating themselves by producing much sharper price increases. If this process is permitted to develop, we shall be faced not only by an internal inflation, which profits the capitalist and damages the small man, but also by a crippling inability to sell our over-priced goods overseas. If this happens, large-scale and chronic unemployment will certainly emerge. The Trade Unions would then lose the bargaining strength which they enjoy under full employment, and the Labour Government would be faced with almost certain defeat at the polls. It would be the end of the Socialist experiment. Britain would probably slip back to the sort of desperate free enterprise which M. Schuman and M. Mayer are now introducing in France.

Faced with this prospect, the Prime Minister has decided to rely once again on an appeal to voluntary effort. He appeals to the Trade Unions to make no further wage demands except in special cases where wage increases are necessary in order to attract man-power into vital but depressed industries. He appeals to the capitalist class to reduce their distributed dividends and to follow the praiseworthy but rare example of those industrialists who are cutting prices. There are sanctions implicit in the statement; but admittedly they are quite insufficient to enforce obedience. What Mr. Attlee demanded last Wednesday was that a democracy should for the first time in history master its economic crisis by free choice instead of waiting to be overwhelmed by it.

What are the chances of success? Either side in industry can only too easily wreck the plan for freezing wages voluntarily. Previous appeals to limit dividends and lower prices have been disregarded, partly because they were regarded as sentimental nonsense by a class not notoriously sympathetic to the Labour Government, and partly because many business-men would prefer to see a return of large-scale unemployment which might bring the workers to heel. Will this renewed appeal succeed any better? Not unless it can be backed by more substantial sanctions than are to be found in Mr. Attlee's statement. Price controls, the only instrument available to limit profits or to prevent the employer from passing on wage increases to consumers, are notoriously ineffective; and the vague statement that, if prices are permitted to rise, wages, too, will have to go up, is unlikely to deter the employing class.

The blunt fact is that the Government is relying on the working class to shoulder the burden. Moreover, sanctions can be applied more easily against it. The Prime Minister made it clear that State subsidies could not be invoked to offset increased wage-costs; indeed, he seemed to hint that, if the wage level became inflationary, food subsidies might have to go. He also appeared to indicate that municipalities and other public authorities which permit unjustified wage increases may find themselves in trouble about their block grants. But, quite rightly, in his appeal to the workers his emphasis was not on threats, but on reason. The working class has far more to lose by permitting inflation than the capitalist, and under a Labour Government, seeking to plan what is still a free economy, the initiative in checking inflation must come from the T.U.C.

The main difficulty is that, though the middle class knows by bitter experience how much it has lost, working people find it hard to appreciate the gains they have made. A larger share of a much smaller national cake is no more satisfying to the individual worker—unless he lives in what was once a distressed area—than the smaller share of a larger cake which he enjoyed before the war. This is particularly true when, as now, goods are in short supply, and the working-class household is induced to waste its money on gambling, smoking and pools because the things it really wants are not in the shops.

But the dilemma is inescapable. If the Labour movement, as it will be tempted to do, excuses its own indiscipline by blaming the excessive profits and dividends of the employer, and continues to press for higher wages, it will play into the hands of its enemies, for whom another 1931 would bring obvious benefits. The Prime Minister has made the choice clear. If the Trade Unions fail to follow his lead, then either they will lose their cherished rights of collective bargaining under a Socialist wages policy far more drastic than direction of labour, or they and the Government will be broken by the financial crash. They are asked, in fact, to show that the British working-class movement has the political maturity to make a planned economy work compatibly with industrial freedom. Their response is likely to depend very largely on the resoluteness of the Government's determination to impose sanctions on the employing side, if necessary, and to impose them in time.

A LONDON DIARY

PARTY political broadcasts are catching on. I am told that B.B.C. check-ups show that about nine million people now listen to them. It is to be hoped that listening to them all is obligatory home-work for Ministers because, as I have frequently pointed out, the microphone (like posing for films) is part of their trade which too many of them neglect. They could certainly get a lot of useful tips from Maurice Webb who replied, as chairman of the Parliamentary Party, to Lord Woolton. It was interesting to compare the "fireside manner" of the two—the "sugar-daddy" technique of Lord Woolton who relaxed on a sofa, as it were, put his arm round the listener's shoulder and said "And, now, my dear, do you prefer soft-centres or hard?" and the "candid friend" technique of Maurice Webb, who sat in the armchair opposite and, without being heartily "matey," treated his listener as a sensible, but not necessarily converted, friend. Woolton, when Howard Marshall was his war-time P.R.O., took broadcasting lessons. Maurice Webb learned his apprenticeship as a fee-earning broadcaster. As to content, Woolton, who "got away" with plausible confidence tricks, was convincingly answered by Webb. He countered him on the "box of chocolates," on rationing, on bulk buying, on the chap who could not buy a business with his gratuity (he was blocked long since by the monopolies and the trade associations) and on "Government by business-men." And all in homely, fireside analogies. It was an alpha-plus performance.

* * *

At first sight there seems to be a good deal in the *News Chronicle's* argument that it is absurd for the Labour Party to forbid its members to participate in the Congress of Europe at the Hague next May which Mr. Churchill is attending on behalf of his United Europe movement. Certainly, if Socialists are forbidden to go to the Hague and sit on the same platform as Mr. Churchill, Government spokesmen in the House should have made it clear how their idea of Western Union differs from Mr. Churchill's anti-Communist Crusade. Any Socialists who do go to the Hague will find themselves in very queer company. Beside Mr. Churchill's organisation they will find a reactionary group headed by M. van Zeeland, a slightly-less reactionary French group led by M. Herriot, and, of course, the various apostles of Federal Union. But should not the Left Wing, instead of boycotting the Congress, go there and put their case? I fancy that what chiefly influences Morgan Phillips in saying "No" is his determination to do nothing which could weaken the position of Socialist Parties in Eastern Europe. He has already played a prominent part in encouraging them to go on fighting for their independence. The fight has succeeded not only in Czechoslovakia, but also in Poland, and to a lesser degree in Hungary. He fears that if the British Labour Party associates itself with Messrs. Churchill, van Zeeland and Co., they may drive the Eastern Parties out of the International. I entirely sympathise with Morgan Phillips' objectives. But surely we cannot go on maintaining a purely negative attitude which presents the reactionaries with a complete monopoly of propaganda for their idea of United Europe. Fortunately the Conference of Western European Socialists on the Marshall Plan is taking place on March 21. My hope is that a unanimous decision will be made to launch a campaign in all the 16 countries which will explain the difference between the Socialist idea of Western Union and Mr. Churchill's. If that were done, then the Western Socialist Parties could all send delegates to the Hague Congress and hammer out the differences between the European Left and the European Right in open debate.

* * *

John Strachey, at his second Dundee meeting last week-end, spoke, I see, of "the critical six months" which are now upon us. With gold and dollar reserves running out fast, and most of our suppliers nearly as hungry for dollars as we are, tiding over the period that must elapse before any Marshall aid can arrive is bound to be, at best, a ticklish business. It is difficult for the entire sterling area, which has an unanswerable claim to share in such reserves as are left; and what with our stopgap Canadian agreement soon to run out, our awkward negotiations with Señor Miranda, and the danger of further deterioration in India's food position, no one who has any responsibility for food supplies this year can be feeling at all comfortable. Reductions in Service rations, up-pointing of tinned meat so as to reduce the demand, and other jugglings with scarce supplies can do only a little to ease our exceedingly difficult situation. Indeed, unless we can patch up something with Canada and Argentina, as well as with Denmark, to carry us on till Marshall dollars begin to roll in (if they do), the British public will be faced almost at once with a good deal more austerity than most housewives are at present at all bargaining for. Presumably the Government still thinks it good policy to play down the badness of the immediate prospects in the hope of the negotiations now in progress coming out all right; but I rather wonder if they are not being a bit too unalarmist. John Strachey did warn his audience that we were only now beginning to feel the effect of last year's cuts in imports, and that we must expect potatoes to be shorter than ever till the new crop is ready; but even he made the black cloud on the horizon smaller than it would have appeared if he had wished to tell the whole story.

* * *

The shortage can be seen at work, not only in the up-pointing of a good many tinned goods, but also in the decision to make the consumer pay for all rises in prices. So far, this has affected eggs and bacon; but we must expect the process to spread over a wide field. Our suppliers, when they agree to take sterling, are more and more inclined to insist on higher prices, especially for quality foods; and, inevitably, the appearance of the new free currency market in Paris will tend to make them harden up a bit more. The consumers will probably have to face rising costs as well as falling supplies, at any rate until E.R.P. begins to produce its indirect effects in increasing supplies from non-dollar sources—and that will take an unpleasantly long time to happen, even if all goes as well as we can possibly hope. Yet it is hardly possible to question the necessity of passing on the price-increases as matters stand; for we can only get the absolutely indispensable basic supplies by paying heavily for the quality goods we get with them as the outcome of a general bargain. I hope the Government's soft-pedalling of the food crisis means that they have seen their way to limit its effects. The worst possible strategy would be to confront the public suddenly with a severe deterioration in food supplies for which it had not been prepared.

* * *

Just over a year ago the Agency for Intellectual Relief in Germany started a project of the very highest importance, to establish lending libraries of British books at a number of centres in the British Zone. There is an insatiable demand in Germany for our books; it is a symptom of the intellectual starvation which is the result of years of intellectual undernourishment enforced upon intelligent Germans by the Nazis. The Agency obtained the blessing of the Control Commission and of the Foreign Office, which has continued to give it very valuable assistance. The report of the first year's work shows that the foundations have been successfully laid, but that the Agency will need more financial and other assistance if it is fully to attain its object. The object is to open lending libraries in Hamburg, Hanover, Düsseldorf, Wilhelmshafen, Cologne, and Bonn. It was hoped that a large number of the books required would be obtained as gifts from the publishers and other people and it was estimated that in addition a sum of at least £5,000 would be required for administrative expenses. During the first year the receipts totalled £1,357 and the expenditure £1,065, and at least £850 will be required for working the scheme in the second year. It is hoped to open the Hamburg library shortly and some of the others before June. The Agency publish a list of books which they need, and anyone wishing to help it either with money or books should communicate with the Agency for Intellectual Relief in Germany, 48, Princes Gardens, S.W.7.

* * *

As an inveterate picker-up of unconsidered trifles of knowledge about "things that go bump in the night," I was greatly intrigued, the other day, by a report in the press of a Court case in Basutoland. The plaintiff, who was awarded £20 in damages, complained that the defendant, a native priest, had both slandered her and been guilty of intimidation by threatening her with Tickoloshe. Who was this personage, described in the evidence as a hairy elf? A friend who was brought up in Basutoland tells me that Tickoloshe, who is sometimes known by the name of Hili, is a pigmy fellow, but inspires more fear even than Selaqoqo, the great lizard, or Isikqukqumadavu, who is as big as a mountain and whose diet consists solely of children. Tickoloshe, who sometimes takes the shape of a tiny bear, appears to have most unfriendly, anti-social habits. He catches children and beats them black and blue; and—suffering apparently from an inferiority complex owing to his small stature—he takes an impish delight, when opportunity offers, of fathering illegitimate babies. Rationalisers of folk lore have I believe an explanation for Tickoloshe: he is the personification of the little Bushmen who lay in wait for the unwary and jumped on them from behind. But then rationalisers are capable of anything—even of explaining Leprechauns as something to do with bimetallism.

POLYCRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Told that the car park that would serve the speedway track might be needed for a school, Mr. G. J. Ellis, managing director of the promoting company, replied: "Is the education of three or four hundred children more important than the entertainment of 20,000 people?"—*Croydon Advertiser.* (Miss M. D. Barnes.)

Jimmie Elliott, 39-year-old animal impersonator, is out of next Sunday night's concert at the Granada, Woolwich, S.E., because the London County Council says it cannot allow animal noises on a Sunday.—*Daily Mail.* (John D. Wing.)

England will be the first country in the world to adopt naturism as the normal way of life, and the first in which you will be able to go about naked in public if you choose.—*Health and Efficiency.* (F. Gubb)

Hundreds of food parcels are being sent every week from America for British dogs.—*Sunday Express.* (Mrs. V. M. Hartland.)

Poor girls whose nails obstinately refuse to grow into beautiful shiny filberts may now remedy the defects of nature with elegant artificial ones—3 guineas the set . . . For girls who incline to bite their nails these are a powerful deterrent.—*Harper's Bazaar.* (Margaret Thompson.)

Mr. O. Hear, stressing the importance of the right to own private property, said that the threat to this right had started 25 years ago, with the supply of free milk to necessitous children.—*South Eastern Gazette.* (F. J. Wood.)

The bland proposal that Herefordshire and Worcestershire should be amalgamated is the most recent example of a plan's inhumanity to man.—*News Chronicle.* (J. P. Guegan.)

SIR STAFFORD'S ADVICE TO THE PLAYERS

(An intelligent anticipation of the Chancellor's scheduled address to the British Theatre Conference, Feb. 5th.)

Learn my speech, I charge you, as I pronounce it to you, crippsily on the tongue, so that hereafter you may repeat my lines. Nor do not rend the air with your booes, thus, but hear all tamely, for it offends me to the soul to hear a presumptuous, addle-pated player tear my arguments to tatters, to very rags, to win applause from his fellows, who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and rant.

Be not demanding, neither, but let your Chancellor's decision be your guidance—that is, to soak the takings through the tax, raise the tax with the takings; for any rebate on entertainment is from the purpose of the Treasury, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to squeeze, as it were, the human out of nature; to strip virtue of her savings, vice of her profits, and bleed the very body of the time with fiscal pressure.

Now, this underdone, or come tardy off, though it make the producer glad, cannot but make the Exchequer grieve—the censure of the which one must, in your allowance, o'erweigh the whole Equity of actors.

O, there be players I have heard say—and heard playwrights praise, and that highly—who, deaf to their duty as Christians, taxpayers and men, have bellowed against extortion most abominably, and prayed it should be abolished altogether, in order to persuade some quantity of bankrupt spectators to think so too; though, in the meantime, increase of Inland Revenue from all sources was being earnestly considered.

That's villainous, and shows the most anti-social frivolity in the rogue that uses it. Go, mind your business.

SAGITTARIUS

G.I. JOE AT HOME

WHEN you passed along Coventry Street in wartime, and saw the G.I.s in their hundreds leaning against the walls in that un-European way, you must have wondered: What do they think of it all? What are they learning from Europe? What will they be like when they get home? Making a longish visit to America, including a trip from coast to coast, I took the chance to find out.

My first difficulty was to find the veterans. Demobbed a year or two longer than our ex-servicemen, they have melted into the general population. With the exception of a militarist minority who are putting their energies into the Reserve, with an eye to starting the next war with a commission, the veterans want to forget what a uniform looks like. I should say that, while both our peoples are natural civilians, there is much more resentment and hostility toward the Army in America than here.

What are the veterans doing? Most of them are are seriously trying to make up for lost time and qualify for careers. In America now any non-manual job means a college degree, and the colleges, with two million students, are crowded as never before. I found that the New Mexico College of Mining and Metallurgy, in the Las Cruces desert, has opened an arts faculty; the students here, as everywhere, live in army camps, trailers, tents and so forth. The G.I. Bill of Rights has been generous, and the Veterans Administration, on the whole, liberal and imaginative, though Congress has now cut its funds and the most daring projects are, of course, the first to go; free psycho-therapy was the first victim of the axe. The average veteran is now in greater or lesser financial straits—except in New York State, where vote-catching politicians have financed a new bonus by putting another cent on cigarettes. When deferred pay warrants were made cashable, nearly all the veterans cashed them on the first day to pay outstanding bills, despite the advice of Mr. Truman.

Those veterans who have gone straight to work instead of to college have plumped strongly for small-scale private enterprise. Gus, who liked London, and Joe have gone shares in a second-hand bookshop. On the next block Bill, who flew in Italy, runs a three-hour cleaning service. Phil, who was a staff-sergeant draughtsman, is in a small advertising agency. Elaine, who was a W.A.C. nurse, has got her aunt to set her up in a Park Avenue dress shop.

Though most G.I.s, of course, do what they've got to, it is clear that they think individualism goes with civilian clothes, and the impersonality of the Army machine has not reconciled them to the impersonality of either a big corporation or a Government department. The "Veterans Taxi Service" is typical.

Now about what they are thinking. Here again one realises with a start how long they've been home, and how far the world has changed since the dancing in the streets on VE-night. Memories of overseas are dim. Of what was learned, little has been retained beyond disconnected facts retailed, like the tales of Othello, to arouse wonderment; I remember a veteran astonishing his wife with the story that the English drive on the left of the road, and the wife turning to me to find out if it was a leg-pull. With growing depression I had to admit that we Europeans appeared to most G.I.s as the Indians appeared to British troops there; that is, the real life was in the cantonment, and Europe was judged through a few types—the policeman, the pub landlord, the clippie—as we judged India by the tea-wallah and the laundryman.

The general idea seemed to be that Europe, just as much as Asia, is "not on wheels." Rather than paraphrase this sentiment I had better give three choice examples: (1) "Those Italians haven't had a new idea since Columbus." (2) From an unusually well-informed veteran: "You may have had social security since Lloyd George, but you still can't go into a store in London and buy a quart of milk and then another quart." (3) "India has got a few good roads and a couple of hotels in the big cities, but China? I wouldn't give you five cents for the whole of China."

This leads me to an important note; there is a sharp difference between the Pacific and the European veteran. The former had a far tougher time and, like our Burmese veteran, can't be persuaded that the European campaign was not a joy-ride. His hatred of war is deeper, his vow of "never again" more vehement. Politically he is sceptical of the policy of helping everyone who is anti-Communist; he has seen colonialism, and he may have seen and hated the Kuomintang; certainly, if he was in the China-Burma-India theatre, Stilwell is his idol. There is a harsh and clean radicalism about these veterans of the Japanese war, compounded from their suffering, their toughness, and their dislike of their commander, MacArthur, in sharp contrast to the popularity of Eisenhower and most of his lieutenants among the European veterans.

The latter tend, as you would expect, to be violently anti-Russian, and full of the usual Berlin and Vienna rape stories. But they are not exactly pro-war; first of all, they have a healthy respect for the fighting qualities of the Red Army, even though they ascribe them to Asiatic fanaticism; second, having done one war, they feel that they have done enough. One day in New York I was buying a newspaper, with the usual Red scare headlines, from a pimply and undersized vendor with one shoulder higher than the other. The vendor was telling the world, "Looks like we'll have to go over and teach those guys a lesson." A veteran next to me in the queue jerked his thumb at the speaker and commented: "4F." (In English, C.3).

These veterans are pro-British, despite Britain's not being on wheels, and assume Britain to be an ally in the coming war and in all intermediate anti-Russian moves. They also assume that they are universally popular in Britain and Western Europe generally, a natural consequence of their having won the war. They dislike the French, whom they suspect of superciliousness, cheating, an excess of culture, and a lack of gratitude for being liberated. They despise the Italians. As a rule they like the Germans, who are more on wheels than most Europeans.

One has to remember that the United States mobilised thirteen million men and that the great majority never left its shores. Thus it would be illusory to expect a collective veteran opinion on politics. One professional politician went so far as to tell me that there is no such thing as the veteran vote, though others have contradicted him —one cynic to whom I put this question replied, "Sure there is a veteran vote, but it isn't composed of veterans." All this has to be borne in mind more particularly in connection with the veteran organisations. The great majority of organised veterans (many, who want to forget the whole thing, refuse to be organised) belong to the old organisations—the American Legion, founded in 1919, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, which dates back to the Spanish-American War. These bodies, apart from a few rebellious branches or "posts," are firmly under the control of highly reactionary veterans of the First World War, with the new veterans almost unrepresented in the leadership. Nearly all the fighting for education, housing, and the rest of it has been done by the new American Veterans Committee, two hundred thousand strong; but the effectiveness of this body has been greatly reduced by a running feud between Liberals and Communists (or between Red-baiters and victims of Red-baiting, according to your opinion) with the Liberals, or Red-baiters, currently on top.

The only solidly political bloc of veterans are the Negro veterans, who have returned home in a crusading mood after the experience of being treated as equals in Europe. They have no separate organisation, but are the driving spirit in the strong Left movement which has arisen in the South and which has already scored notable victories in the fight against lynching and denials of democracy. It was a Chicago Negro post, too, which was the only American Legion post to prove rebellious enough to be expelled *en bloc* by the national headquarters.

I think now that we misunderstood those homesick young men in Coventry Street, and expected too much of them. We expected these lads from Oshkosh and Texarkana to be vitally interested in European social and political life and in the issues over which we—not they—had brought about the war. We expected them to learn and to remember. The world would be a better place had they done so; but I don't think they are to blame because they did not care in the way we care. I felt very sympathetic to the remark one American veteran made to me as we drove along the beautiful coastal road from San Diego to Los Angeles. "They used to tell us we were only fighting to go home, and this was something wrong, and showed our stupidity. But now you look at it, can you blame us?" Now he asked me, I couldn't.

MERVYN JONES

THE DOCTORS VOTE

Only the "floating-voters" in the Doctors' Ballot can now be influenced by any argument. The militant protagonists assuredly voted "Aye" or "No" by return of post when they received their papers last Saturday. There are, however, many doctors, whose votes or abstention may be decisive, and who (unswayed by the B.M.A.'s openly avowed appeal to their emotions) still have rational doubts about their participation in the Service. They have until next Saturday to complete their paper. The simple advice to them is: "Wait for next week's debate in the Commons before you either post your ballot-paper or throw it in the wastepaper basket."

In that debate, the Government will have a chance to explain the issues to the public and to make it clear that this is not just a private argument between Mr. Bevan and the B.M.A.—that there is a third party to this contract, the potential patient. It will also be interesting to see how the Opposition, so singularly ineffective in the debates on the Bill, handles the B.M.A. case, and how the law-makers react to the issue of "Right of Appeal" about which the B.M.A. has tried to rouse such moral indignation. Even the *Times* has recanted on its former attitude to Mr. Bevan's "crowning misjudgment":—

> It has been advocated in these columns that the Government should give way if the doctors insist, but it has to be recognised that this is poor reason, without stronger justification from the B.M.A. for making a change which many would regard as bad law.

The next big issue which the B.M.A. makes is the £300 salary. This, they say, will eventually make all doctors Civil Servants. The alternative they propose is a higher capitation fee—an extension of the panel system. They argue that this would preserve the doctor-patient relationship. As a doctor writes in the *British Medical Journal*, "I am glad that my less fortunate brethren will be helped over the stile. The abolition of the basic salary would only swell the net profits of the big practices. *Per capita* the overhead expenses of a small practice are much higher than those of a big practice." He points out, too, that the doctor will be on closer terms with his patient because he will not have to worry about whether the sick can afford his fee or his treatment. Most of us can think of doctors who have often wondered where their first £300 was to come from; not just the young doctor struggling for a foothold but the man who is the glory of a profession dedicated to humanity—the country doctor, the slum doctor, the man who, in a scattered, thinly peopled practice, or in the tenements and the "backlands," gives of his arduous best and has not the heart to ask a fee. The successful, affluent doctor argues that a salary is a subsidy for the unsuccessful, but "good doctors" are the salt, not the silt, of the profession.

Then, sale of practices. The B.M.A. still insists that patients should be the unconsulted assets in a transaction in which their names are sold to the doctor who can pay the highest premium. By the same argument, the vicar should sell his congregation to his successor.

On the old bogy of "negative direction," the B.M.A. is now noticeably less vocal. There is still a lot of the old tear-jerking about the widow who is to be defrauded, about the son who will not be allowed to enter his father's practice, and a lot of other arguments in favour of paying out public money to a redundant doctor. Yet, at the same time, the B.M.A. is claiming as a weakness of the Service that there will not be enough doctors to go round.

Some doctors are complaining that the press unfairly depicts the medical profession as grasping, and does not do justice to its humanity and self-sacrifice. They should not blame the journalists but those who have conducted the doctors' case. I for one have, with intimate reason, a profound admiration for the doctors of my acquaintance and for the high principles and purposes of the profession but I commend to these aggrieved doctors the leader in the *B.M.J.*, of January 24, headed "Money and Freedom." In it dissentient doctors are coached in what they have to say, after July 5, when they ask a fee from their insured patients. (In the previous issue the *B.M.J.* assured panel doctors that they had nothing to worry about because National Health Insurance would continue if the doctors stopped the National Health Service.)

> If Mr. Bevan decided to ignore the wishes of the majority of the doctors there would indeed be a crisis. The state of affairs would be confused for at least a few weeks. During that period doctors would have to charge their patients fees. If these patients say that they are paying 5s to the National Insurance Fund, the doctor should point out accurately and firmly that only 10d of that was going to the payment of a small proportion of the total cost of the Health Service. And he should also point out that the medical profession was not being paid anything by the State and that the patient must put the blame at the door of the Minister of Health.

Later in the same article—in which it refers to what the working-man spends on beer and tobacco—the *B.M.J.* takes up the case of the young doctor who has to borrow money to buy a practice. It admits that in the past he has "unfortunately fallen into the hands of unscrupulous money-lenders" and points out that the B.M.A. can now help him to borrow through reputable sources but concedes that there is "room for further exploration" to make the purchase less burdensome. And this is the voice of the B.M.A. which is defending the traffic in practices!

The Health Service as defined by this Act, is not what many of us, who are not doctors, would want. It will be, by emphasis and the circumstances of our times, a Sickness Service rather than a Health Service, concerned with illness rather than positive health. That is left to the spurned M.O.s who "degrade" the profession by taking public salaries and to the wider service the Government has to offer through school-feeding, decent housing and so on. Even the Health Centres (reduced now to group surgeries for the doctors instead of the Peckham principle of anticipating and forestalling sickness) will have to wait for buildings. Nevertheless it will be the finest humanitarian Service in the world; and the doctors, if they subscribe to the highest principles of their profession, can make it work.

Ritchie Calder

JOURNEY TO KYOTO

A few days after the Japanese Army had started the "incident" in North China, I hurried back to Kyoto to wind up my studies at the Imperial University. I was thinking of sailing home on the first boat leaving Kobe two days later. I took a fast train from Tokyo, where I had been spending my holiday; and expected to arrive at Kyoto before dark.

The landscape on the way was fairly familiar to me as I had travelled on this route several times. But in order to avoid the malicious and suspicious eyes which of late the Japanese had occasionally fastened on persons slimmer, taller and less hairy than they were, with much less protruding teeth and with normal eyesight, I looked out of the window, pretending to enjoy the cherry trees, distant hills and the summer dust. It was only when the sun tilted west and a blast of grimy wind poured in that I turned my gaze away. With astonishment I found the compartment almost empty. There was only a young woman sitting quietly in a corner.

I knew that the journey was about to come to an end. I began to feel a little lonely, strangely enough. As the young woman looked rather peaceful, almost meek, with her head hanging low, I had the idea of talking with her. Just then a gust of smoke from the engine, with a lot of dust, blew in. I got up and shut the window with a bang. The noise disturbed her. She raised her thoughtful head and stared at me. Her dark, slightly sleepy eyes grew larger and larger as I stared back at her.

"Lo San!" she exclaimed. "How is it that I didn't recognise you before?"

"Because you were dreaming," I said, walking towards her. Then I took a seat opposite to hers. "I saw you were dreaming."

"I never dream," she protested, but her voice was mild. "Isn't that odd? The moment I shut my eyes I just go into a heavy sleep. This time, however, my bones are aching so much that I can't doze off even when I shut my eyes. Don't you think the third class awful? Such a hard seat!"

She was an acquaintance of mine, quite a close acquaintance in a way. I first met her in her village near Omori, where I had stayed in a cottage for a week with a Japanese friend of mine, a middle-aged bachelor, a school-teacher by profession. He used to spend a few days there for "a little relaxation," to quote his own expression, after the spring term. In fact he went there simply in order to leave his house empty so that the police could search it thoroughly during his absence. He did so because he wanted to avoid embarrassment on both sides. This annual routine was due to the fact that, having lived on the island all his life, he was fond of making pen-friends in foreign countries. His correspondence with, and hospitality to, foreigners like me made him a dangerous person, although his career was so pitiably harmless. When I was staying as his guest in the village, I had my laundry done by this young woman. She did it so well once that I gave her two postcards and three ounces of sugar as a sign of international goodwill. This was quite an impressive present in Japan. So she kowtowed to me twice and regarded me as a kind, generous young man.

That was how I came to know her.

Now we started a conversation about my teacher friend, from whom I had not heard for some months. She told me that he did not come to her village for "relaxation" any more, because he had been sent abroad to do some intelligence work with the Imperial Army. I immediately had an uncomfortable thought. I supposed that the Japanese authorities had counted on his long-established relations with "international friends" through the pen as an important asset for a highly secret job. But how this middle-aged bachelor friend of mine, once suspected as a dangerous person, was going to exploit his pen pals for the interest of his Emperor was a very sad question to me. So I dropped the topic.

"Tell me," I said, changing the subject, "what made you wash and iron clothes so well."

I realised only too late that my remark was absolute nonsense. But she seemed to take it quite seriously, as every Japanese would.

"I have to do my job well, sir." Her haggard face grew solemn. "Because I depend upon it for my salt and tea and matches."

"Don't you have land to work on? I always thought that you were pretty well off for land."

"Yes, we have a few pieces of land to farm. But they belong to Prince Ishimoto."

When she mentioned the name, her downcast eyes brightened up all of a sudden as though she herself were of the Royal Family. I was always amazed by the fact that a royal title should hold such magic for the people on this island.

"Who is this Prince Ishimoto?" I asked.

"Prince Ishimoto is Prince Ishimoto," she replied. "No one has any right to ask who he is. His name is sacred."

"Well, then," I said, not quite satisfied with her explanation, "he must be a very rich man, I imagine. He probably doesn't have to bother about the land rent. Do you pay him any rent, by the way?"

"Of course we do!" she said, surprised by my question. "How can we not pay rent to our Prince? He is our father, our benefactor."

"How much have you to pay him, then?"

"Forty per cent. of the crops."

This reminded me of her children, whom I used to see picking potatoes bare-footed in the fields about the village. There were three of them, ranging from seven to four. When I was last there a year ago, she was expecting another, and she looked terribly cumbersome as she waddled about in her backyard drying clothes. All her kids, with heavy, drooping eyelids and smooth, closely shaven round heads, were very sweet. But their faces looked yellowish-pale, and sometimes they looked even tired like old men when they trudged along on the path with small sacks of potatoes on their backs. I knew they needed a little more fish and rice. So did my middle-aged bachelor friend. But he could not understand (nor I) why the father could not afford the food, although he understood perfectly well why he himself could not get married in spite of the fact that it was unpatriotic to remain single after twenty-five. The peasant father seemed to work very hard; we never saw him rest.

"I think the land rent is a little too heavy," I said. "After all you have five mouths to feed."

"Six," she corrected me. "The little one is now ten months old. I have an awful problem feeding him, because I have neither breast nor soft food."

"But you should try to reduce the rent a little so that you can have some spare crop to sell for cash. You can always buy powdered milk."

"That's impossible!" she said. "Everybody pays the same rent. No one dares to change it unless the Prince changes it himself. But he is so busy that he never comes to our district to review the situation. You know, he has many factories in Kyoto. They keep him occupied all the time in town. He can't be bothered much about us."

I felt it useless to carry on the discussion about this land business since she accepted the situation without any doubt. Besides, it was now getting dark and the train was pulling into the main station. We had to get up. Suddenly I heard a thud on the floor. I discovered it was a potato that had fallen out of her hemp bag. I picked it up for her.

"Why do you carry such potatoes all the way to Kyoto?" I asked with curiosity. "There's plenty of them here, and cheap, too."

"They are our first crop for the season, you see," she explained. "I am sending them to the Prince so that he can taste them first."

"That's why you are making the journey?" I asked with some anxiety; I was worried about the fare, for which she must have saved up for at least two months.

"Exactly," she said with some pride in her tone. "I must come here in person to show him my loyalty."

"But he may not recognise your loyalty as he is a busy man. I don't think you will be able to see him. It's unwise to leave your little one."

"Never mind," she said, her dark brows knitted together slightly, "I expect the porter will deliver my present to him and tell him of my visit. I shall be going back by the night train. My little one can sleep in the cradle without me for some time, I believe."

The train now halted all of a sudden. The passengers were getting off. As we were saying goodbye to each other in the dusk, I somehow felt that she should not really make the journey. So I said, "You should let your husband come instead, you know. He can make up for the loss of a day's work some other way."

"He was called up two months ago," she said briefly, very much in a hurry to get away.

I was about to ask her whether he had been sent to my country for the "incident." But she had already turned away. I watched her disappear into the falling darkness. By some queer urge I wanted to call out to her, reminding her of the time of the last train back to Omori. But on second thoughts I refrained, realising that she must know her own business better. I remained outside the station for some time. I was thinking that when I got back to my country in three or four days' time, in the present circumstances, I should have to be a soldier. And what a nuisance it would be if I had to fight this young woman's husband and my middle-aged bachelor friend!

CHUN-CHAN YEH

The Arts and Entertainment

THE THEATRE

ISN'T it time now for the English drama to kick off the traces of an exhausted realism, to stamp its vigorous hoofs and let out some deep rhetorical neighs? Isn't the current tradition of "real life" theatre growing dreadfully threadbare? The development of the film might, one would have thought, have released the theatre, as the development of photography released painting, from its enslavement to the visible appearance of things. The cinema is so much better adapted to the subdued tones and the diminutive shades of the surface of ordinary life: and the intimate touches of intimate life that the camera can catch and hold and emphasise strike home the deeper for coming not to a collective audience watching as an entity, but to each lonely individual isolated in the darkness, enisled in the cosy plush. A theatre audience (this is a point Mr. Priestley makes in his recent book) is a collective body which has to be affected as a whole. For this purpose, realism, as we now have it in the theatre is by now a blunted instrument.

Our popular preconceptions about the stage seem to be, roughly, that plays must be based on "real" people in "real" situations and that the more naturally they talk, act and re-act, the better the play and the more skilful the actors; while the audience's pleasure consists in being able gaspingly to recognise what is already familiar to it. This is, of course, the opposite of the ancient view of the theatre which believed that the trivial could safely be left to life and that the stage should display the extraordinary moments of extraordinary people in the heightened speech that extraordinary people and extraordinary dilemmas called for. At its best this tradition had a highly significant relation to ordinary people too, to *us;* but it was not that of mere representation. With its debasement, it lost touch and the sort of thing it became one gets some glimpse of in *Diamond Lil,* at the Prince of Wales, an imitation Nineties melodrama. From the false theatricality of this, realism (when it first struck the theatre) must have come as the most exhilarating of pleasant shocks. But now, as we watch this absurd concoction of old-time villainy, does not the suspicion teach us that all the same it is nearer to "theatre" than many modern domestic plays which offer us only the mildest of illusions—the illusion that we have shared a slice of other ordinary people's very ordinary experience? Thick though the slices of ham may be in *Diamond Lil,* don't we sometimes long for some pieces of it between our realist 'doorsteps' of bread and marge? (Anyhow the ham at the Prince of Wales's is laced with mustard in the person of Miss Mae West and if you like it hot there are a bare two hours of her twice every evening.)

Melodrama may not be the way of revitalising our tradition. There was Mr. Bernard Shaw who showed us how to make the play of Ideas a delight. The past tense is necessary because he might never have written a word for all the difference it seems to make to contemporary playwriting. Yet what is the good of having a genius, if not to borrow, rob and steal from him, to ransack his brains and to demand not one, but endless blood-transfusions to give vitality to the current tradition. Take *Bred in the Bone,* at the Lyric, Hammersmith—a play which has some pretensions to being a play of ideas—propounding the question: is it our birth or our upbringing that chiefly make us what we are? If only some of the Shavian corpuscles had entered the theatrical bloodstream, how much easier it would have been for the author. As it is the ideas, such as they are, bear only the slightest relation to a light comedy about a Scotch doctor and his wife living in Hampstead whose adopted daughter discovers her natural family in a Stepney slum. More—and this is where the realist vice begins painfully to squeeze—since these people must, in the tradition, be ordinary humdrum people like you and me, they cannot even discuss this question wittily, cleverly, or rhetorically: they would be "out of character" if they did. And what could be more banal, taken by and large, than the comments of ordinary humdrum people like you and me on even the most interesting of abstract questions?

T. C. WORSLEY

RADIO NOTES

THE voice sent forth cannot return; especially when it is a broadcast voice, for you cannot go back over its words, nor can you ask it to repeat itself. The phrasing, the climaxes, even the substance of a well-argued "talk" are all difficult to remember, and even more difficult, perhaps, for the habitual listener than for the casual one (*Living Writers,* Sylvan Press, 8s. 6d.) is a collection of critical talks broadcast in the Third Programme. I had listened to most of them, and before I read the book I tried to think what I had heard said. Very little came back. I remembered a genial parenthesis by Miss Macaulay on "those who demand a grim novel, possibly about miners." I remembered storing up, with intent to purloin, some remarks by Mr. Sackville West on the subject of plot. I remembered that Mr. Grigson had had one of his nagging moods on him; that Mr. Pritchett had gaily danced up to the microphone and before we knew where we were had rapidly erected a characteristic bell-tent of generalisations inside which he had proceeded chastely to undress Mr. Orwell:

> For the last forty years no one in England has been able to write a successful novel about love. Love, in the sense in which George Eliot, Thackeray, Hardy, Dickens regarded it, a powerful sensual affection for somebody else, preferably of the opposite sex, came to an end with the death of Queen Victoria . . .

This wasn't, perhaps, what Mr. Pritchett had actually said; but it was the "sort of thing" I remembered, and the way I remembered it. I remembered also Mr. Betjeman's excellent reading of a brilliant passage from Mr. Evelyn Waugh; and I remembered that when he suddenly said, "If Mr. Waugh is listening from that graceful Palladian house of his in north-west Somerset," I had thought contentedly that this must be the Third Programme's equivalent of "Can you 'ear me, mother?"

But, alas for memory! Now that one has the talks in print one sees that Mr. Pritchett had spoken with disconcerting moderation on a quite different subject; and that Mr. Waugh's house is in Gloucestershire.

The outstanding talk is Mr. Edward Sackville West's detailed, exact and illuminating assessment of Miss I. Compton-Burnett. I am still grateful for his reminder—remarkably apt to-day, whether in reproach or not—that "plausibility of *plot* has always been thought quite unimportant by the greatest novelists—by Balzac, for instance, and Dickens, Hardy, Henry James." Certain other novelists are less fortunate in their critics. If Mr. Sackville West shows how much can be packed into a talk, Mr. L. A. G. Strong shows how little can. His final paragraphs are excellent, but he dwells for most of his space on Miss Elizabeth Bowen's emotional sensitiveness to light, and somehow perversely convinces one that this is a dangerous nervous tic with which poor Miss Bowen is ineschewably afflicted. Mr. Waugh seems to me to deserve better treatment than the mere Puff Simple given him by Mr. Betjeman; and Mr. Graham Greene is rather done down by Mr. Arthur Calder-Marshall. *Some* basic sympathy is needed with one's subject on these occasions, but Mr. Calder-Marshall ignores not only the art and the poetry in Mr. Greene, but also that growing humanity which in *The Power and the Glory* and *The Ministry of Fear* is all the more impressive for having been preceded by a rather theatrical hell-for-everybody disgust; Mr. Calder-Marshall also gives us a not unnoticeable amount of sixth-form pulpiteering ("The decade of the thirties was one of transition, in which the old world of class privilege was already, etc., etc.").

Most of the critics had cogent and original things to say. I could wish, now, that Miss Macaulay had gone a little deeper into Mr. Forster's views on personal relationships—to the point, at least, where one's acknowledgment of their wisdom relaxes and one's questionings as to their profundity begin; and that Mr. Grigson had shown us more of Mr. Wyndham

Lewis than his healthy potency as a disinfectant—for he has presumably some positive achievement as well. But it must be added that one didn't feel these particular objections during the actual broadcasts.

HENRY REED

THE MOVIES

"Vice Versa," at the Odeon

"International Cartoons," at the Cameo, Charing Cross Road

"Palm Beach Story," at the Royal, Marble Arch

Vice Versa is doubly disappointing. It misses the chances provided by an ingenious and popular original, and its failure must be pinned to Mr. Peter Ustinov, the most promising of our young directors.

In his first film, *School for Secrets,* he delighted many and infuriated a few by irresistibly overstepping the mark. A semi-documentary of Radar became, under his guidance, the occasion for a comedy of English foibles and reticences that has implanted in our vocabularies the word Boffin. His Boffins were as oddly delectable as they sound. Now he tries his hand at Bultitudes—birds of no less angular a charm—and surprisingly, regrettably, he has made a mess of it. He has had the, frankly, awful idea of making them farcical, whereas their whole charm resides in the exquisite solemnity, punctuated by a groan or a giggle, with which they enact their diabolical predicament. Everyone who recalls the delicately exact tortures of Anstey's nightmare will be shocked to hear, in the first place, that Bultitude *père* has been accommodated by Mr. Ustinov with a mistress from the Gaiety. This is rather like giving Lady Macbeth twins, turning Madame Bovary into a Duchess or making Oblomov captain of the local football team. *Vice Versa* is too trifling a creation to be sacrosanct? Perhaps, though I'm not sure of the ethics. But its whole point is the scrupulous dislocation of Victorian life. One trite oft-expressed sentiment—"Ah, my boy, I wish *I* were in your place, just off to school"—one magical swap-over, and there we are. Without another item changed, the rest of the Victorian scene remains irreproachably solid.

Mr. Ustinov sets out to guy Victorian life in general, so not only missing Anstey's point, but making *any* wild development possible. Mr. Bulitude's chorus-girl is accompanied by duels in Kensington Gardens, temple-looting in the style of *The Road to Zanzibar,* knockabout with early motor cars, interiors that parody the old Lyceum, all the "Aha's!" and bristling handlebars of comic melodrama. It only needed Monsewer Eddie Grey cracking a whip in the conservatory to complete what is meant for a glorious romp among our grandparents.

Here and there, in this confusion of the weirdly overdone, there were funny moments. I enjoyed, for example, bits of the duel north of the Round Pond, and the whole of the football game at Dr. Grimstone's. The latter, indeed, was sizzlingly comic, and should—if Mr. Ustinov had gauged all the possibilities—have set limits beyond which he could not successfully step. As it is, the film comes off best when it keeps reasonably close to Anstey: James Robertson Justice as the formidable Dr. Grimstone and Anthony Newley as Bultitude *père* in the guise of badgered schoolboy get and take their chances of straight acting. Roger Livesey hovers agreeably but (through no fault of his own) uncertainly, on the outskirts of Blimpery. I hope that Mr. Ustinov's exuberant gifts won't in future be damped by the memory of this piece in which he has so disastrously forced the pace.

The fortnight's season of International Cartoons at the Cameo offers nothing else a quarter as good as Disney—that perhaps was to be expected—and little that promises well along other lines. The best shots at something new are a Russian fairy-tale of the ice-demon and the Czech puppet cartoon of insect life.

For those who, like myself, lament the absence of funny films to-day, an old favourite—Preston Sturges's *Palm Beach Story*—comes back with all its blithe dazzle at the Royal cinema, a little along the Edgware Road from Marble Arch. It runs till Sunday (inclusive) and no doubt will turn up again.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

BALLET

A Tschaikowsky Ballet at Sadler's Wells

Anthony Burke's first ballet, *The Vagabonds,* in spite of its rather turbid theme and "Wandervogel" style, showed undeniable choreographic promise, if also a threat of boredom. In his second ballet, *Parures,* composed on the theme and variations of Tschaikowsky's Suite in G, the choreographic talent has developed and the threat has vanished. *Parures* is a very enjoyable ballet. The title is modest rather than pretentious, for *Parures,* though it has no obvious theme, has much more solid qualities than those conferred on it by the finery of the delightful decor and costumes in which it is dressed by Vivienne Kernot, who was also Mr. Burke's collaborator in *The Vagabonds.* One cannot talk of interpretation in this ballet, in the sense of personal rendering of a role, for it has no dramatic content; but it has some admirable plastic qualities, to which the dancers do full justice, and some really beautiful tableaux, like that with which the ballet opens, and which is enhanced by a very happy mixture of colours. Besides some excellent technical inventions there are skilful effects of counterpoint in the setting of one movement against another, and in the gradual dissolution of a group upon a background of stationary dancers, like voices moving above a ground-bass. Anthony Burke, who is still a very young choreographer, has missed some opportunities of musical interpretation, as in the dance solo on the exquisite violin cadenza, which surely should have been more smooth and lyrical, or in his failure to find a recurring plastic motive for the recurring theme. But there was not a dull moment in the ballet, which was rendered with great gusto and sometimes brilliant technique by the excellent team of dancers from the Second Company of the Sadler's Wells Ballet, lately strengthened by two young dancers in their teens, from Australia and South Africa, Elaine Fyfiels and Maryon Lane. There is a delightful bloom of youth upon this company which makes them exhilarating to watch, and no doubt to compose for. A pleasant feature is the virile quality of the male dancers, amongst whom Leo Kersley, David Poole and Michael Boulton are conspicuous. Donald Britton and John Kranko were lent by Covent Garden for *Mardi Gras,* which has greatly improved with performance. Kranko dances the Pugilist with a kind of muffled, soft violence, which has an authentic African tang. Frederick Ashton's *Les Rendezvous* made a delightful ending to an enjoyable programme; but what point is there in a new decor less pleasant to look at than the old?

BERYL DE ZOETE

Correspondence

WESTERN UNION

SIR,—The confusion in some minds as to whether Bevin's statement in the recent foreign affairs debate differs from the Churchill policy, or (in the mind of Malcolm MacEwen) whether the "Keep Left" scheme of a planned Western Union differs from Bevin, is easily explicable. It arises from the fact that a Western Union, even if socially planned and desirous of freeing itself from American war-commitments, might deepen the present disunity in the world. It is not difficult to foresee the process. A Western Union would be bitterly attacked by Soviet propaganda; it would react by becoming increasingly resentful and anti-Soviet; and, conscious of its obligation to Marshall aid it would find itself, in the event of open conflict, at the least a non-belligerent ally of U.S.A.

If some form of Western Union is the inevitable next stage in international affairs, the more realistic attitude would seem to be that of exploring whether there is any means by which this development, instead of consolidating an anti-Soviet front, could promote European unity, and so halt the drift towards war. This could be done if the formation of the Union was accompanied by certain conditions: (1) that the primary purpose of the Union was not to serve as a distributing agency for American aid but to promote its own recovery and to assert its independence, if necessary at the cost of foregoing this aid; (2) that it would pledge itself not to enter any hostile alliance against U.S.S.R., except in the event of the violation of its territory by Soviet forces; (3) that it would not interfere with the domestic concerns of the countries within the defined Soviet sphere; (4) that it would actively resist the use of its territory as a base for military operations; (5) that it would, as a unit, seek trade agreements with Eastern Europe; (6) that Britain would abandon any Staff negotiations committing her to co-operation in American military plans.

Any detailed explanation of these conditions is obviously impossible here, but there are two criticisms which it may be well to anticipate. First, this programme claims the support both of those who defend Russia and those who are critical. Even if we regard Soviet fears as unjustified, we should be eager to remove those fears and thus transform the world situation. Even if we believe that the Soviet aim is to destroy Western democracy, we should recognise that the best way of preserving that democracy is to show that it is capable of positive initiative and has not so little faith in itself that it must wait, cap in hand, on America's doorstep.

Secondly, the chances of inducing the Western Union to embark on this line of policy would not be so remote as may seem now to be the case, if Britain gave the lead; and Britain would give the lead if public opinion were aroused to a realisation that this is the way to European unity and that unless we secure that unity we are moving nearer to the catastrophe of a third war. Hence, the crucial importance, I suggest, of the type of conditions which I have outlined.

KENNETH INGRAM

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THE DOCTORS' DILEMMA

SIR,—THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION is once again to be congratulated on trying to rid the "Doctors' Dilemma" of humbug and irrelevant issues. I should have liked it to go still further and call it the "Minister's Dilemma," for it is indeed hard to see what is troubling the doctors, if it is the practice of medicine they are concerned about.

The main predicament of general practitioners who welcome Mr. Bevan's scheme and deplore the ravings of the B.M.A. is that they have no adequate means of making their attitude felt, but must needs put up with a self-styled mouthpiece which wounds their professional ideals and implies charges against them which are both serious and unfounded. To argue that the patient will suffer if his doctor becomes a salaried State servant is to imply that the insured patient of to-day receives inferior treatment, *qua* insured. I protest that this can only mean crass ignorance of the true state of affairs in panel practice, or else sheer misleading of the public. I think and hope that the former is the true explanation, for to the "cream of the profession" (incidentally, its most vocal members) the panel patient only exists as a "case" in hospital; the patient's family and any hardships imposed on them by the father's illness do not exist at all. It is the family doctor's job to befriend, help and advise the stricken household, but he must do it with great tact, since he must do it for love: it is not possible to assess such service in cash, even if one could bring oneself to do it, still less is it possible to accept payment for it, while still posing as the family's friend in need. Mr. Bevan promises to enable the G.P. to become the family doctor in the best sense of the word, without strain, without fear, without reservation of any kind; he is promptly opposed on the grounds that he threatens to ruin the "sanctity" of the doctor-patient relationship. Are we seriously asked to regard this as a valid argument, and does the B.M.A. honestly believe that a financial transaction can bring doctor and patient into satisfactory personal touch with one another?

May I, Sir, in the light of long and intimate experience put it to your readers that the collecting of private fees is the only jarring element in an otherwise uniquely satisfactory relationship; I am prepared to believe that the process is relatively painless when the patient is rich and if an expensive secretary does the collecting, but these are palliatives at best and do not justify an essentially faulty proceeding. Without the palliatives, and very much more commonly, the case looks like this: one saves a life, and one charges 18s. for it afterwards—because overheads must somehow be met, and because the patient is deemed to be able to afford that amount. It is pathetic, undignified and distasteful; it is an incongruity which has absolutely no parallel in human affairs, and the real, perennial doctor's dilemma is how to by-pass it, how to give service which cannot and must not be related to the patient's financial resources. Mr. Bevan offers the perfect solution, and I am so far misrepresented by the leaders of my profession that I appear to reject it. Can anyone show me a way of avoiding misdirection and countering the fatal policy pursued by my "leaders"? COUNTRY PRACTITIONER

SIR,—It is an ironical consequence of the clash between the reactionaries of the B.M.A. and the Minister that the latter should have thought fit to postpone the inauguration of an essential feature of the service, as it affects the general practitioner and his patients, the Health Centre. By doing so he runs the grave risk of perpetuating, for an indefinite period, all the worst features of "Panel Practice." The overcrowded waiting-rooms, the inadequate equipment, the over-worked practitioner, lacking clinical and clerical assistance, and living in an atmosphere of perpetual domestic unease, all these are to remain as before. The gross remuneration earned by any particular practice may remain unchanged, but the items of service required to be rendered daily, and the expenses entailed, will undoubtedly increase.

For those who, like myself, have been supporters of the Act since its inception, it is unthinkable that the Minister really intends to offer the public a general practitioner service which will certainly fall far short of the best standards of private practice to-day.

Nothing could be more inept than the official statement on which the B.M.A. bases its opposition to the Act, and there are unlikely to be many last-ditch defenders of the anachronism of good-will ownership. But that there is wide-spread uneasiness among practitioners of experience no one can doubt. They are fearful, not because of doctrinaire objections to the Act, but because they foresee that the scheme as at present conceived, cannot possibly, on the day of its inauguration, offer a service that is other than indifferent.

Failing a realisation that the rapid development of Health Centres is necessary, there is a danger that those fine concepts for betterment, which the Act contains, may fail to develop into completed plans, but rather be stifled at birth.

Are we then to be doomed to say: "Video meliora, proboque; deteriora sequor." PRACTITIONER

SIR,—In your leading article you were unfair to the large majority of doctors, many of whom have been thinking of, and planning for, a National Health Service for over twenty years. The idea originated in the minds of doctors who visualised a time when there would be a sufficient number of good houses for the people, when preventive medicine and hygiene would be perfected, and when a regional Hospital Service and local Health Centres would be established, so that good health and vigorous manhood and womanhood would be the order of the day.

The Minister of Health has provided a limited number of new houses (about 10 per cent. of what are necessary), limited Hospital Services, limited Consultant facilities, and is hoping to bluff the public by regimenting the general practitioners on July 5th. He has certainly offered considerable financial inducement to doctors to accept service under the new scheme. Thoughtful and imaginative members of the profession, however, realise that during the transitional stage (which may last from ten to twenty years) the Medical Services of the nation will be disorganised by reason of the extra demands made on a limited number of personnel. This is the real dilemma, and it will not be met by the Act which comes into force this summer.

The real need is for the Minister to implement his Housing Programme, to organise existing hospitals and build new ones, to find the essential consultants, and provide facilities for the training of 10,000 more doctors in the next ten years. He should also try out various forms of Health Centre experimentally during that period, and, finally, take the step which he is proposing to do first of all, regiment the general practitioners.

Rome was not built in a day, and a Health Service which is worthy of this nation will only be evolved slowly and with much hard work on the part of "the backbone of the profession." In the circumstances, the abusive attitude of Mr. Bevan when he met the Negotiating Committee was uncalled for, and your leader of last week a doctrinaire rather than a realistic approach to the problem. M.D.

CROP TARGETS

SIR,—The article by your agricultural correspondent misrepresents the true position in agriculture. The real issues are contained in a few figures.

(1) Cost of producing one acre of wheat (your correspondent) £15. Average yield per acre (1947) 15.2. cwt. (Ministry of Agriculture). Controlled price: Millable, 18s. 6d. per cwt.; non-millable, 16s. 3d. per cwt. Revenue at higher level, £14 5s., at lower, £12 7s. per acre.

(2) Cost of producing one acre of potatoes (your correspondent), £60. Average yield per acre, 5.8 tons (Ministry of Agriculture). Controlled price, £6 15s. to £9 per ton. Revenue at higher level £52 and at lower, £38 per acre.

If one remembers that the yields given are not based on actual figures of production but are merely guesses by the Ministry of Agriculture, questioned by farmers as unduly high, the economic argument against the production of wheat and potatoes becomes overwhelming.

The Ministry of Food is paying £26 per ton for Australian wheat, over £30 for American and £35 for Argentinian, and is probably exceeding even the last figure for Russian wheat. Apparently the super-efficient Australian, American and South American farmers need twice the price accorded to our own farmers to make their production economic.

In the light of those figures, the remarks about B farmers made by your correspondent are nonsense. Only B farmers would be stupid enough to lose money producing uneconomic crops. The A farmers would try something else and it is precisely the A farmers who now won't touch either potatoes or wheat. They quite fail to see why they should subsidise imported wheat or potatoes. The much-publicised subsidies do not alter the position one fraction.

With the prices fixed by the Ministry of Food the farmer loses money the minute he touches a potato or a wheat-field. Direction or compulsion won't alter the position as the Committees know perfectly well.

Let the Ministry of Food and the Treasury continue their insane policy of deflation in agricultural prices, a process initiated by Hudson in 1942, and there will be neither wheat nor potatoes grown in the country in a few years' time. HUGH QUIGLEY

SIR,—The contributions of your paper usually fall short of the expected standard whenever farming comes up for discussion. Mr. F. W. Bateson in your issue of January 24th calls the grant of £12 an acre for potatoes a "gratuitous insurance against the weather." Yet, in the preceding paragraph he quotes £60 per acre as the cost of growing them. In other words the insurance covers only one fifth of the cost. The average yield for 1947 was six tons an acre. At £7 per ton the average farmer receives (£42 plus £12) £54 for an outlay of £60. This simple arithmetic may have more to do with the target not being reached than the B farmer about whom Mr. Bateson has so much to say. B farmers are no doubt a problem confronting Mr. Tom Williams. In this context, however, the amusing picture Mr. Bateson gives is irrelevant. I very much doubt that A farmers responded any better. The reasons

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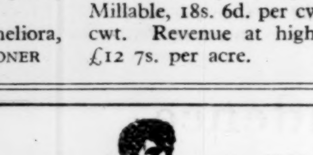

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RECORD PROFIT

THE 24th annual general meeting of the British Tyre and Rubber Co., Ltd., was held on January 30th, in London.

Sir Walrond Sinclair, K.B.E. (the chairman), said that after excess profits tax, profits tax, depreciation, and other charges, the profit, subject to income tax, amounted to £664,536, or rather more than double that of their previous record. Those much improved results were due mainly to a very considerable increase in the turnover and efficiency. The increased profits fully justified the larger total distribution of 20 per cent., less income tax, proposed, as against 15 per cent. last year.

The only item in the balance sheet constituting a prior charge against the company's assets was that of the First Mortgage 4½ per cent. debenture stock, the outstanding amount of which was £424,507. For some time past the directors had had that particular item under consideration, and have now decided to give the necessary notice in accordance with the terms of the Trust Deed of the company's intention to redeem that debenture stock on September 30th, 1948, at the price of 102 per cent., plus accrued interest.

So far as the current year was concerned, their returns available at present indicated satisfactory progress. They were doing their utmost to expand their exports, but much of their production represented essential components for other industries, and were exported as such. It was consequently extremely difficult to assess with accuracy the exact percentage increase in values. So far as conditions under their own control were concerned, he could see no reason why their progress should not continue.

The report was adopted.

why the "target crops" are improving are mainly financial and technical. The problems confronting the Minister are much more complex than would appear from your contributor's article, and nobody should envy him the job of stepping up British Agriculture. I should think that the ill-informed general public causes him as much concern as the B farmer.

R. F. NENFELD

[Our Correspondent replies: "The arithmetic is not as simple as all that. For one thing Mr. Quigley has forgotten that wheat can't be grown without straw. A 15-cwt. crop of wheat should include 22½ cwt. of straw, and the controlled price for wheat straw is now 64s. the ton (and you can get more than this 'under the counter'). Add £3 12s. to Mr. Quigley's revenues per acre, and even the odd farmer who harvested non-millable wheat last summer isn't doing too badly. Mr. Nenfeld's complaint that the Government will not reimburse the unlucky or unskilful potato-grower the whole cost of a crop failure is typical of the 'heads I win, tails you lose' economics that is popular in some farming circles. In any case, about a quarter of the cost of the potato crop goes in digging, clamping and riddling, and the lighter the crop the smaller these items are. With a total failure, therefore, the acreage payment reimburses the farmer to the extent of between a third and a quarter of his outlay and not just a fifth. The round figures that I gave of £15 the acre as the cost of growing wheat and £60 as the cost of potatoes were based on representative costings by the university economists. They were not an attempt to guess the *average cost of an average yield* (a statistical abstraction that soil and climatic variations make almost meaningless), but were only quoted to show how much more expensive it is to get calories from potatoes instead of wheat. In the costings I used, the £60 input returned an output of over 8 tons of potatoes per acre, and the £15 input 19 cwt. of wheat. The trouble with the B farmer is that he skimps the input (especially of fertilisers), and so his yields are lower than they need be."—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

PALESTINE

SIR,—I feel that the inaccurate account of certain recent events in Jerusalem contained in the letter "Neutrality in Palestine," published in your issue of January 24th, requires correction.

The circumstances in which patrols were established at the gates of the Old City were as follows: On December 13th bombs were thrown into an Arab crowd immediately outside the Damascus Gate of the Old City by Jews passing by in motor cars. In the explosions which followed, seven Arabs were killed, and 54 injured. Responsibility for this outrage was claimed by the Jewish terrorist organisation, Irgun Zvai Leumi. As a result the Arabs of the Old City set up road blocks to check the identity of passers-by. These road blocks were cleared away by the security forces. On December 29th the same terrorist organisation carried out another indiscriminate bomb attack at the Damascus Gate. Check posts at all entrances to the Old City were then set up under the supervision of British police and it is they who have been checking the credentials of the Police and Army at these points. The necessity for examining the credentials of members of the police and armed forces arises from recent incidents in which Jewish terrorists have disguised themselves in British Army and Police uniforms to facilitate the perpetration of outrages against the Arab population. The statement that these checks were carried out by Arabs was first made by a Jewish Agency spokesman in Jerusalem on January 5th and was subsequently withdrawn after correction.

Throughout the period of the disturbances there have been adequate British forces within the Old City to protect the Jewish residents and, whenever required, food convoys have been taken to the Jews in the City under strong military escort. Contrary to allegations that the British troops are idle spectators of this communal conflict it can be said that but for their intervention the Jews in the Old City would probably have suffered severely in life and property.

K. W. BLACKBURNE,
Director of Information Services, Colonial Office.

SIR,—Mr. Atiyah tells us that if the Arab League were to accept a Jewish State in Palestine, there would occur throughout the Middle East a revolutionary uprising of the masses of the people against the existing Governments and régimes in the Arab world. Knowing the social and economic degradation in which these régimes maintain the masses, I really cannot imagine a better reason for the speedy establishment of a Jewish State. Can you?

R. S. DOUGAN

ARTISTS IN CORNWALL

SIR,—Your readers who were interested in Patrick Heron's article in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION recently on artists in Cornwall should know that the St. Ives colony is in grave danger of dissolution due to the lack of studios. The number available for professional painters has dwindled from one hundred to thirty-eight during the war years, and now the block of thirteen known as the Porthmeor studios is coming under the hammer. The present owner has agreed to give the St. Ives Society of Artists first refusal if it can collect £6,000 during the next few weeks, and the studios will then be kept for the use of artists in perpetuity.

The fund inaugurated is in memory of Borlase Smart, who was Honorary Secretary of the Society for many years. Himself a painter of considerable power, he had the unique prestige which courage and loving kindness can bring, and he used it to break down opposition and win recognition for his fellow artists. The younger group named by Patrick Heron owe much of the recognition they have gained to his efforts, for he believed that every young painter should have a chance. It was his particular wish that these studios should be safe for those who follow.

An official appeal has been launched in St. Ives. A copy was sent to me by W. Barns-Graham, one of the leading artists of the younger group whom Patrick Heron unaccountably failed to mention. These were the words she wrote on the back: "Even if you can only spare five shillings, please do, for the sake of Borlase's hard work, for the sake of those studios, for St. Ives as a colony. There is even a box for shillings."

Donations should be sent to David Cox, Honorary Secretary, The New Gallery, Norway Square, St. Ives, Cornwall. Cheques to be made payable to the "Borlase Smart Memorial Fund."

DOROTHY WRIGHT

MONTEVERDI'S VESPERS

SIR,—I am sorry that in referring to the December broadcast of Monteverdi's "Vespers" I should have spoken so off-handedly and inexplicitly. Recently in Perugia I heard, at a musical festival, some Monteverdi Psalms sung by the Rome Opera Chorus and by soloists used to operatic singing. It was the most overpowering musical experience, from a sensuous point of view, that I remember; when I spoke of the "Vespers," it was at the back of my mind and I should have plainly said so. Rightly or not, it has made me much regret the lack of robustness in a good deal of contemporary singing of Italian works here. But I hope Mr. Redlich does not really think that I should like to hear a choral work sung throughout in a steady fortissimo. I think I have said nothing to imply *that*. I also know that Italian singing can at times be excruciatingly vulgar.

HENRY REED

FRENCH SOCIALISTS: A CORRECTION

SIR,—Allow me to correct a small but important misprint in my last letter on the French Socialist Party and the "Third Force." I wrote ". . . the drop *to* 10 per cent in the M.R.P. vote in the municipal elections." This came out as ". . . the drop *of* 10 per cent."

K. ZILLIACUS

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

In the fineness of his prose John Henry Newman was surpassed by none of his contemporaries; his career, his character and the working of his mind, moreover, seem to me endlessly fascinating. But we can no longer expect the general reader to be familiar with the ecclesiastical controversies that provided the Victorians with so much excitement, and he is likely therefore to find many of Newman's preoccupations merely bizarre. To few outside a faithful minority of Anglicans has all this talk of Articles and Rubrics, of the Apostolical Succession and the Eastward Position, much more meaning than the quarrels of Byzantine Greens and Blues. Allusions even to the Scriptures have become widely incomprehensible. To-day bewilderment rather than alarm would be excited, for instance, by Newman's threat to ride over his opponents "as Othniel prevailed over Chushan-Rishathaim." You cannot, however, begin to understand the intellectual climate of nineteenth century England without studying the Tractarians, and Newman in particular.

He remains an impenetrable enigma, though so much has been written about him. Apart from the *Apologia* and his vast correspondence, we have vivid, if not always trustworthy, accounts of him from Dean Church, Francis Newman, Thomas Mozley, Isaac Williams, Mark Pattison, Dean Lake and many others of his acquaintance. The official Life by Wilfred Ward is one of the best biographies I know; and the delicate matter of his relations with Manning is presented with exemplary fairness in Abbot Butler's Life of Bishop Ullathorne. Some evidence, however, is still withheld from us, notably the correspondence with Lord Emly and (in great part) with Lord Acton. A little new material is now offered in *Newman and Bloxam, An Oxford Friendship*, by R. D. Middleton (Oxford University Press, 18s.). The author is an Anglican clergyman no less commendable for his temper than for his scholarship; and the friendship he describes formed a touching accompaniment to Newman's life.

In 1836 John Rouse Bloxam, a resident Fellow of Magdalen, aged twenty-nine, met Newman, who was six years older, in the newly consecrated church at Littlemore. He fell at once, and for ever, under that celebrated charm. What preachers, one wonders, could similarly enrapture Oxford to-day—not Stalin himself, I think, even if he spoke there every week in a voice as seductive as Greta Garbo's. Newman penetrated to men's consciences with a power that was almost hypnotic. Bloxam offered to be curate of the Littlemore church, which was attached to St. Mary's, obtained this duty and worked under Newman for some three years. Sometimes he acted as messenger between Newman and Dr. Routh, who was for sixty-three years President of Magdalen. He was the only Head of a House who showed the great reformer any sympathy, and Newman dedicated to him in 1837 the *Lectures on Romanism and Popular Protestantism* "with a respectful sense of his eminent services to the Church and with the prayer that what he witnesses to others may be his own support and protection in the day of account." Mr. Middleton does not mention this incident, which is, however, interesting, because, according to Thomas Mozley, the "venerable" President notoriously neglected his duties, and the prayer in Newman's dedication was intended to remind him of "'the day of account' in which he would want 'support and protection'"!

Newman, after his submission to Rome, did his utmost to persuade Bloxam to follow him. He called on him by night in Magdalen, he invited him to Oscott: "I must show you my Crucifix when you come, with a particle of the True Cross inclosed in the beam of it. Indulgences, too, are attached to the use of it. I trust it will convert you." This may sound a tactless, as well as humourless, method of approaching a clergyman, since relics and indulgences are seldom the features of the Catholic Church that persons outside the fold find most engaging. Newman, however, was usually expert in adapting his arguments to the individual he was addressing; and Bloxam did, in fact, delight in what may be called the apparatus of devotion—in this respect differing from the founders of the Tractarian Movement. (Neither Keble nor Pusey nor Newman himself was a ritualist; it was the succeeding generation that delighted in manifesting the Oxford doctrines by the use of sacramental vestments and elaborate ceremonial, a provocative policy that has proved victorious.) Not even the promise of indulgences could make Bloxam budge from Magdalen. When he did leave, seventeen years later, it was to the college living of Upper Beeding in Sussex; and there he died, five months later than Newman, in 1891.

He remained always a passionate admirer of Newman, cutting from newspapers every reference to him, corresponding with him, visiting him. In later years Newman felt an increasing tenderness towards the Church of England, not—as some have wished to believe—from any regret at having left it, but because he saw in the Establishment a barrier, however imperfect, against the rising tide of scepticism; and also because the hearts of the aged tend to turn to scenes associated with their hopeful youth. In a touching letter to Bloxam he writes: "To old friends, like you, I have a chance of being seen, as I see myself, more in the past than in the present." When he returned from receiving his Cardinal's hat in Rome, he went to see his erstwhile curate in his Sussex rectory before going home to Birmingham. Thereafter Bloxam paid several visits to Newman; and when he received the news of his friend's death he said the Roman Office of the Dead in Beeding church, while the bell tolled and the flag flew half-mast on the tower.

On one small matter, which concerns his probity, the book throws new light. In February, 1870, Bloxam in a letter of birthday congratulations hinted very discreetly that he would be interested in Newman's opinion about the outcome of the great Vatican Council, and the answer was nothing if not sanguine. Untold good will, Newman proclaimed, would come from the Council, since it was bringing into personal acquaintance men from the most distant parts.

> Nor can I believe that so awful a visitation in the supernatural order, as a renewal of the day of Pentecost when it is granted them, will not make them all new men for the rest of their lives. They have come to Rome with antagonistic feelings, they will depart in the Peace of God. I don't think much will come of the movement for Papal Infallibility, though something very mild may be passed.

Less than a month earlier he had written to Ullathorne that the Council infused into him little else than fear and dismay:

> I look with anxiety at the prospect of having to defend decisions which may not be difficult to my private judgment, but may be most difficult to defend logically in face of historical facts. What have we done to be treated as the Faithful never were treated before? Why should an aggressive and insolent faction be allowed to make the hearts of the just to mourn whom the Lord has not made sorrowful?

Wilfred Ward, with characteristic candour, printed both these letters, with the comment: "It is to be observed that in writing to Anglican friends he emphasises the good which the Council was likely to effect." At this point the reader of the biography had cause to cock an eyebrow: the Early Fathers might recommend "economising" the truth, but did not Newman's change of language here amount to deliberate deceit? Mr. Middleton brings us some fresh evidence. Newman himself enters the box to account for his apparent inconsistency (an explanation to Bloxam was imperative because parts of the earlier, despondent letter had somehow seeped into print). In the interval—he explained—between writing the two contradictory accounts of his feelings, he had received from Ullathorne in Rome a letter about happenings there "which dispelled all my fears. It was under the influence of that Letter that I wrote to you."

This story I have found confirmed in Ullathorne's letter and in Newman's answer describing it as "very tranquillizing." Satisfactory as all this is to those of us who admire Newman, one further observation must be made. The letter to Bloxam, explaining that his fears had been dispelled in February, was written in April—by which time they had returned! (See letters dated March 20, March 27, and April 12, in Wilfred Ward's *Life*.) It is rash to accuse Newman of telling lies, as Kingsley discovered. But while telling nothing but the truth, he did not always feel obliged to tell the whole truth—which of us does?—and he was not always unwilling to leave a false impression; one needs, therefore, to scrutinise his phraseology with particular attention. He persuaded himself that if careless readers were misled by his elaborately chosen words, it was their own fault. Mr. Gladstone acted upon the same unwisely legalistic principle. Since they both must have discovered that the average reader is careless, their indignation at the inevitable accusations of duplicity was a little unreasonable.

What makes the workings of Newman's mind singularly impenetrable is that both his scepticism and his credulity went to lengths that few of us can comprehend. He came near to being a solipsist; in any case he believed spontaneously and absolutely in the existence of only two beings, himself and God. His other beliefs, forming a colossal inverted pyramid, were based upon this, and not upon the evidence of his senses, which he thought could not be trusted to provide any substantial truth. Less defensible than this idealism, I suspect, was his scepticism about the validity of induction, which he made up for by a most exaggerated trust in what he called "the illative sense," a faculty of what we now call "the subconscious." He was thus led to the most curious conclusions. He went out of his way to accept pious legends, never imposed upon the faithful and now discredited by them—such as the aeronautical journey of the Holy House of Loreto from Nazareth to the vicinity of Ancona, with a landing on the way in Dalmatia. He apparently conceived that he had better reason for believing this than most of us have for believing that Great Britain is an island. On the other hand, he was alive, earlier than the authorities of the Church, to the need for new methods of Christian apologetic. He sacrificed, moreover, his dearest earthly hopes rather than accept ultramontane theories that he considered dangerously novel. This rebuts, I consider, the common accusation that his beliefs were only the reflection of his wishes. The trouble rather was that his intellect and imagination alike moved in a realm of abstractions, upon which nothing so unrefined as common sense was allowed to intrude.

The disappointments that pursued him were so recurrent that he may be suspected of inviting them with some part of himself. "Shall I tell you," said Manning towards the end of his life, "what has ruined that man's career? One thing and one thing only: Temper! Temper!! Temper!!!"; and we may find some confirmation of this in Newman's avowal: "I have generally got on well with juniors, but not with superiors." Even with juniors he had his difficulties; he quarrelled readily with those who disagreed with him, and while inspiring alarm he detested deference. The friendships that he formed and kept were more like loves, for his tenderness was equalled only by his occasional ferocity. From Dartington one summer he wrote to his mother: "I should dissolve with essence of roses or be attenuated to an echo if I lived here." (This is hard to reconcile with his odd declaration that he felt he would be a better and more religious man if he lived in Taormina!) Just as he was credulous because naturally sceptical, so he was ascetic, one may hazard, because naturally sensuous. Those who like their heroes simple should keep away from Newman no less than from Mr. Gladstone. On the other hand, even the deepest divergencies in opinion and temperament fail to prevent some of us from finding in these intricate, not to say tortuous, spirits a profound and charming nobility.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

THE REBIRTH OF ROME

The First Europe. A Study of the Establishment of Mediaeval Christendom A.D. 400-800. By C. DELISLE BURNS. *George Allen and Unwin.* 25s.

Ruskin, in a somewhat petulant criticism of Gibbon, blamed him for studying a "Decline and Fall" when a healthy-minded man would prefer to study a Rise and Growth. This is what Dr. Delisle Burns has actually done, and done with most remarkable learning, insight and historical imagination. While Rome was gradually crumbling in ruins something was all the time growing up under the rubble, a growth not by any means pure or free from infection by all the decay around it, but somehow alive and moving towards a new coherent Whole. "French," as Dr. Burns says, "is not bad Latin"; but it once was; or at least it is a result which could only be achieved by means of the decay of Latin; and if the condition of Europe about the year A.D. 400 seemed merely the ruin of a great civilisation it had become by the ninth century a new civilisation of a very different sort. It used old terms and phrases. It was consciously archaistic in its ideals, but, thanks to changed conditions and a profound unconcious ignorance of history, the more it imitated antiquity the more utterly different it became. The book covers a "dark" period and moves freely in a literature known to few English savants outside the Catholic Church. Dr. Burns's training as a priest has been of great service to him; he understands mediaeval Christian thought from the inside, while his subsequent change of belief leaves him free to criticise it in perfect freedom.

It is difficult for anyone contemplating the present state of Europe not to sympathise with Gibbon in sighing for the age of the Antonines as "that period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous." Its marks were peace and complete absence of armies throughout Europe; the legions on the frontiers largely engaged in mere local government; an unprecedented standard of justice in the administration of the provinces, and no barrier in race or nationality to the rights of Roman citizenship. The causes of Rome's rapid decay have been studied again and again. Experiences of the present day will probably enable historians to understand many things that were unintelligible to a more fortunate generation. Overcentralisation, lack of local government, ruinous economics resulting from mass slavery, which itself was the result of predatory wars, "*die Ausrottung der Besten*" under the stress of poverty and social disorder, all played their part. Rome somehow squandered her precious Peace, the *Pax Romana* that enabled her to represent Law and Justice and to stand out as *Caput Orbis*, the one Eternal City. Dr. Burns lays much stress on the effect of a weak policy of "appeasement" towards the barbarians. The supply of slaves came first from the east, from the races whom Aristotle regarded as by nature suited to slavery; as that source ran short and wars with the north increased, a new type of slave came in. The Nordics were disorderly, drunken, undisciplined, but good at fighting. Civilised people are often averse to military service. It was convenient to use the Nordics in the army as mercenaries, to promote some of them to high commands, to pay them blackmail, even to give them territory of their own, to submit to be raided, looted and at last dominated by them. It was dangerous when the slaves in the cities were of the same race and general appearance as the armed bands of plunderers.

One is perhaps too contemptuous towards the weak and irresponsible behaviour of the ruling classes, both pagan and Christian, after the time, say, of Honorius. Dr. Burns quotes a most striking example of these qualities from the autobiography of a Christian grandson of Ausonius (p.96). To do their duty they needed power, and that is just what they had lost. The impressive thing is the almost magical prestige which for so long hung about the name of Rome. The barbarians generally knew they could not govern. They had to have a civilised Roman to do that for them and to lend them the prestige of the Roman name. "Romania" was the civilised world, with its culture, law, knowledge and good manners.

The most significant single fact perhaps is that, when the Emperor and his court had departed from Rome to Ravenna, and even to Constantinople, one great authority remained unshaken in his place, the Bishop of Rome. The Catholic Church inherited the magic of the Roman name. The provincial Bishops kept up the tradition of knowledge and culture, and above all maintained the Roman Law, as a Law of Nature or even a Law of God, permanently superior to the will of any barbarian king. The heroes of this story, as Dr. Burns insists, were Augustine, Pope Leo I, Epiphanius of Pavia, Isidore of Seville, Bede and Boniface; not Theodoric or Clovis or Charles the Great.

Rome had united Europe; the new system broke it up into many warring kingdoms. The word *miles*, soldier, in the fourth century, was almost a term of contempt, meaning a barbarian; in mediaeval Europe it was a term of honour, meaning a knight. The Christians to Tacitus or Pliny were a set of revolutionary oriental fanatics, convinced that no rich man could enter the kingdom of Heaven and that this wicked Roman world was shortly to be destroyed by fire; in the "First Europe" Christianity had become a dominant authoritarian system of thought and tradition, European and Nordic instead of Asiatic, and all on the side of law and order. Man was sharply divided into body and soul, the world into the spheres of Pope and Emperor, and neither division worked. Dr. Burns quotes the saying that the Middle Ages had all the vices except vulgarity and all the virtues except moderation. In one region at least it was definitely superior to the Roman Empire, the exquisite achievements of its architects and stonemasons. Yet, on the whole, compared with, say, the age of Cicero it does strike one as barbaric. We could any of us discuss philosophy or religion or political theory with Cicero without much feeling of a gulf separating us. He smiles at the myth of *Jovem barbatum, galeatam Minervam;* he is quite ready to discuss the defects of monarchy and republicanism, the disgustingness of gladiatorial shows and the unnaturalness of the institution of slavery. With a mediaeval bishop, even with Abelard, such talk would be impossible. The two great differences would be, first, the immense hold upon the mind exercised by the traditional Revelation, and next a curious inability to compare words with facts, or even to be sure what the words mean. The language of hyperbole which was natural to the religion of poor Asiatic fishermen had, by historical processes, been imposed upon rough Nordic fighters with kingdoms and dioceses to administer, and a curious unreality was often the result. All men were brothers, but all outside a very small circle were eternally damned. The highest ecclesiastical authority was *servus servorum*, but ambitious prelates intrigued and fought for that humble place. The spiritual power had the duty of teaching the temporal power obedience to the law of God, and bishops wrote fine treatises for kings who could not read or write; yet in practice "the events of the ninth and tenth centuries showed clearly enough that kings and emperors reformed the Papacy and the Church more frequently than the spiritual power reformed the temporal." Splendid apocalyptic ideals were freely preached by men whose

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conduct bore no relation to them. The First Europe was a real new "civilisation" in Mr. Toynbee's sense of the word, but it is hard to think of it as civilised. GILBERT MURRAY

NEW NOVELS

The Reprieve. By JEAN-PAUL SARTRE. *Hamish Hamilton.* 10s.
Magnet of Doom. By GEORGES SIMENON. *Routledge and Sons.* 9s. 6d.
Mister Johnson. By JOYCE CARY. *Michael Joseph.* 8s. 6d
The Snake Pit. By MARY JANE WARD. *Cassell.* 8s. 6d.
The Gorse Blooms Pale. By DAN DAVIN. *Nicholson and Watson.* 8s. 6d.

The Reprieve, the second volume of M. Sartre's trilogy, *The Road to Liberty,* takes one back a dozen years or so, to that last Friday in every month, which was the day on which one sharpened one's pencil, stuffed the notebook in one's pocket and went forth snooping in the name of Mass-Observation, a privileged eavesdropper in the cause of what was vaguely science. One sat in the office, lunched in a restaurant, settled oneself in the evening in a strategic corner of the saloon bar, and all the time one wasn't at all what one seemed, one was the concealed movie-camera, the hidden microphone, and it was all—now one scarcely knows why—very exciting. One's reward came later: when one learned as a result of the united labours of the nation's Mass-Observers that at exactly 1.45 p.m. on the last Friday in April a woman at Cleckheaton was rushed to hospital in labour, a sixty-three-year-old panel-beater in Wolverhampton fell off a chair in the canteen with a stroke, a car-salesman lowered his third whisky in a pub off Mortimer Street, a housewife in Newport, Mon., bought a tin of salmon and a packet of table salt on tick in a shop bearing a sign "Please do not ask for credit as a refusal often offends," and a farmer's wife in Piddletrenthide placed a china egg under a reluctant hen. It was all, one supposed, very significant; quantity, by mere fact of there being so much of it, had been changed into quality; and certainly a slice of life had been produced that went far beyond the Goncourt brothers' wildest dreams.

From the erstwhile Mass-Observer's point of view, then, M. Sartre's new novel has a certain period flavour, even an old-world charm. Just as Mass-Observation produced a cross-section of English life on the last Friday of each month and on Coronation Day, so M. Sartre gives us what purports to be a cross-section of French life during the eight days ending September 30th, 1938, Munich week, ending with Daladier coming down at Le Bourget and muttering, of the crowd, "The bloody fools!" though in the original he uses an expression such as one trusts no British prime minister would ever soil his lips with. To obtain the effect of simultaneity M. Sartre often crams two different actions widely separated in space into one sentence:

> Horace Wilson felt an uneasy shiver down his back, and said to himself: "Can he be sincere?" and the nurse thought: "My husband in '14, in '38 my nephew: I shall have lived between two wars."

Disconcerting at first, the device finally has the appearance of a trick, doomed, one fears, to be exploited by novelists of much less power and competence than M. Sartre. An intensely crowded novel, this has no central characters, so that one reads it much as one would watch a film played entirely by supers. With what relief one catches a glimpse of people one has met before, of Chamberlain belching, of Matthieu, Daniel, Boris, Brunet and the other characters from *The Age of Reason,* here, alas, reduced to mere units of the crowd. So large, indeed, is M. Sartre's gallery of characters that he has scarcely time to develop any of them; they are to be recognised by single attributes: thus, Pierre cries out whenever we meet him, "I am a coward," and Daniel, probably the most successful of the characters in *The Age of Reason,* is more or less reduced to declaiming to himself on every occasion, "I am a paederast!" One's final impression is that in *The Reprieve* M. Sartre set himself an impossible task, which as a technical experiment lacks the interest of Dos Passos's books of twenty years ago. What one hadn't expected was that one would ever be bored by him. The translation is as admirable as one has come to expect of Mr. Eric Sutton.

What remains to be said of M. Simenon that has not already been said? He is still the master of the seedy and the claustrophobic; Dunkirk is still isolated by rain and if not by rain then by fog, but things are no better in Panama, where fog is unknown; the sense of isolation is still complete. The *Magnet of Doom* is of the essence of Simenon: this story of the relationship between the ruined, ruthless old French empire-builder and his ambitious, envious young secretary who deserts his wife in order to accompany his employer to Panama and there to murder him, told with that economy of detail, that ability to render atmosphere with a single sentence of which M. Simenon alone has the secret, is continually exciting, even moving. Yet at the end the question faces one: Why isn't Simenon, good novelist as he is, even better? Why, with all his talents, isn't he the great novelist one invariably hopes, as one picks up each new book of his, that he is going to be? M. Simenon takes the French equivalent of a *News of the World* crime story and tells it with consummate artistry; the suspense and the sense of doom he gets into it are almost intolerable; "Yes," one thinks as one reads, "this is what happened, this is how murder is committed." But at the end there still remains obstinately only the *News of the World* story we started with. Our knowledge of the psychology of the criminal may have been enlarged, but not our knowledge of the human situation. M. Simenon, it seems to me, is a truly terrifying writer, terrifying not because of what he writes but because of what he does not write. There is always a dimension lacking, the dimension that makes *Brighton Rock,* for example, more than a mere story of an adolescent gangster or M. Mauriac's *Thérèse Desqueyroux* more than a mere story of attempted murder by poisoning. It is the absence of this further dimension which makes M. Simenon's work in the end unsatisfying. Mr. Geoffry Sainsbury's translation is good, though something seems to be wrong with the following sentence: "The journey left an after-taste which hung about him, in his throat and in all his members." . . .

One turns to the reprint of *Mister Johnson,* which, like its author's other early works, was curiously neglected when first it appeared, with something like relief, for Mr. Cary has the quality of humanity, of sympathetic imagination, which M. Sartre and M. Simenon, great as are their talents, conspicuously lack. *Mister Johnson* is one of Mr. Cary's African novels. As a study of the impact, sometimes ludicrous, sometimes tragic, of Western ideas of law and administration on native African peoples, its only rivals are the author's other novels, *Aissa Saved* and *An American Visitor.* The Mr. Johnson of the title, a mission-educated African who, "like a horse or a rose tree . . . can turn the crudest and simplest form of fodder into beauty and power of his own quality," is one of the most delightful characters in modern fiction, and Mr. Cary's vignettes of the other personages, Negro and English alike, are no less brilliant. If it was missed when first published, this exuberantly comic and at the same

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time essentially tragic work by one of the most original of contemporary novelists should not be allowed to slip by unnoticed now.

The Snake Pit is something of a *tour de force.* Set in an American mental hospital, it tells of the breakdown and gradual return to sanity of a young woman novelist. How the facts related, which are sufficiently barbarous, compare with the practice in English mental hospitals I have no means of knowing. We are given the heroine's background only by inference, nor are we told the causes of the breakdown or its cure, except that it seems that deep analysis failed. It strikes one as a singularly honest book. What is especially interesting is the author's technique. We see everything through the eyes of the heroine, the style of the early chapters fluctuating in coherence with the state of her mind. Later, the action is narrated in what one assumes is the author's normal style, a wryly ironical understatement reminiscent of the *New Yorker*. The characterisation, of patients and staff alike, is very well done.

Mr. Davin's new book consists of twenty-six stories of boyhood on a small New Zealand farm, of adolescence in a New Zealand university, at Oxford and in London, and of war in the Middle East. In his stories of adolescence Mr. Davin, it seems to me, loses control over his medium, largely, one suspects, because he is not sufficiently outside his material. But the stories of boyhood are very good indeed, written with an exactness of observation that is most satisfying and with the freshness of the scene against which they are set. Of the war stories, the two stories of the campaign in Crete, "Under the Bridge" and "Danger's Flower," are as good as anything the war has produced.

WALTER ALLEN

OUT OF THE ASHES

The Phoenix Cup. BY JOHN MORRIS. *Cresset Press. 12s. 6d.*

The general ignorance of Japan was most usefully lessened by the publication in 1943 of *Traveller from Tokyo,* of which there have since been sold, in its various editions, more than a quarter of a million copies. Last year John Morris returned to Japan for six months as a correspondent for the B.B.C., and this new book contains what he modestly calls some notes on Japan in 1946. He ranged as widely as possible; saw the Emperor's first public appearance as a "democratic" monarch; had a long private conversation with General MacArthur; met a variety of members of the occupying forces and of eminent or obscure Japanese, from politicians to ex-privates; toured the ruins; and even contrived to meditate in the garden of the Ryuganji near Kyoto, a famous formal garden laid out in the fifteenth century.

His book, which is partly reporting of a sober and straightforward kind and partly ruminative, derives its title from a small saké-cup which he dug out of the ashes of his former house in Tokyo. He regards this sole material link with his former life there as a symbol of those civilised virtues of the Japanese "which, if we desire peace for that country, we must help to revive." Mr. Morris is level-headed, and, in spite of his deep affection for the Japanese people, his manner of writing is unemotional. There is, however, one deeply emotional passage in the book—the narrative of Private Tanaka, which Mr. Morris has lately and effectively delivered here as a broadcast. One of the most memorable reminiscences of the war in the Pacific, this story alone would serve to demonstrate the civilised virtues of the race to which Tanaka belongs, and how favourable can be the impact of Western example upon a Far Eastern mind half crippled by the lies of militant nationalism.

About the present impact of American example upon Japan Mr. Morris must inevitably have had, and must continue to have, mixed feelings, for he walked straight into the beginnings of an experiment intended to transform Japan into something different from the Japan he had known, and he must worry as to whether, in getting rid of what is barbarous, the experiment may jeopardise what is not. He agrees that it is desirable for the peace of the world that Japan should become democratic, but insists that it is impossible for a people brought up under one political system to change suddenly to another. Though "democracy" has become a catchword in Japan to-day, there is a vast difference between declaring a complex principle evolved by one civilisation and ensuring its gratified assimilation by another and totally alien civilisation. It is easier to guess what democracy means to General MacArthur than what it can possibly mean to the ordinary Japanese, who is, at present, as Mr. Morris says, devoting his whole energy to solving the difficulties of mere existence. He did not come across a single Japanese able to give a satisfactory definition of democracy; in fact, the example set by some members of the occupying force had produced an impression that democracy gives the individual complete freedom to behave as he wishes and implies no obligation. He found a widespread inclination towards "acting in a democratic manner"—but the stress is on the word "acting." Except (as usual) among intellectuals and students, he found very few signs of a real change of mind; and he did not find, nor would any thinking person have expected to find, the slightest sign of any sense of war guilt.

The great question is whether Japan is merely going to be superficially Americanised, only to revert to something like her former policy when the occupation is over; or whether a radical and permanent change can be effected in the national habit of mind. The obstacles in the way of such a revolution are enormous: to take a single one, Japan now has some eight million adult men demobilised from the armed forces, and all of them, as Mr. Morris says, have in the past been subjected to "what was probably the most efficient process of indoctrination the world has ever known." He thinks that the only hope would lie in a complete reform of the educational system, with supervision of schools and universities for fifteen or twenty years. (It was proposed to make a careful inquiry into the credentials of all Japanese teachers, which would mean the personal interviewing of 414,000 persons.) He advocates a simplification of the Japanese written language: its difficulties at present add about four years to the time required to qualify for entry into the professions. And he stresses the importance of giving the Japanese some idea of the probable length of the occupation, since a merely temporary compliance with the democratic principle must be useless.

In an appendix Mr. Morris quotes various opinions on the use of the two atomic bombs.

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Among them in a suggestion that the way they were used has convinced the Japanese that the white man has no claim to the ethical and spiritual leadership of the world: but surely few Japanese have ever come near acknowledging such a claim. Mr. Morris quotes elsewhere an item from the official U.S. Army newspaper published in Tokyo. It describes how, at Nagasaki in May, 1946, "three leathernecks of the 10th Marine Regiment" acted as judges in a beauty competition and presented a Japanese school girl with a bouquet and the title "Miss Atom Bomb of 1946." This may have been democracy, but it was not magnificent.

William Plomer

THE NATIVE STUFF

These from God's Own Country. By S. L. Bensusan. *Routledge* 15*s*.

My Woodland Friends. By S. L. Bensusan. *Blandford Press.* 10*s*. 6*d*.

These two books come happily together, because they represent both facets of Mr. Bensusan's passion. Passion is the right word; his lifelong devotion is more intense than a preoccupation. The result is that he has made for himself a niche outside the literary pantheon. Many people resort there who are not otherwise interested in letters. I have met farmers and other country folk who have only one or two books in the house; but one of the books is a collection of Essex tales by Bensusan. "He's got it right," one farmer living near Saffron Walden said to me some years ago.

And so he has. This is so, too, in spite of elements of nostalgia, and sometimes even of a slight sentimentality, which drift through Mr. Bensusan's prose. They drift through the talk of country-folk also, and in the same way and degree. His portraits of the marshland natives of Essex are affectionate, but shrewd. He can reveal the most appalling qualities, without condemning them. He says of them:

> Brave men and women those; cunning and crafty in some instances, simple and free from guile in many more. They were as circumstances had made them, but nearly all were lovable when you grew to understand their foibles and to realise how many of them carried their faults on the surface and were capable of acts of kindness, devotion, charity and forbearance. Hard-headed, hard-working and shrewd, many of the women with bitter tongues and kind hearts, all were very human, living for the most part in a sort of backwater and never seeing the full tide of life as the waters of Time flowed past them to the ocean of Eternity.

The author laments that the rustic isolation in that backwater is passing, along with the conditions of life that have made for such individuality and crustedness. "Sophistication has wrought great evils," he says. "The effect is best seen when you think of the old Elizabethan cottage, thatched, tiled, ingle-nooked and built with wattle and daub on a frame of oak and elm, redeemed from all amenities, but full of the beauty of individuality, and compare it with the Council House that has taken its place, boasts what is called 'the electric,' may even have running water and an aspidistra in each front window, and is as closely related to its neighbours as any two peas in a pod."

There is much to argue about there. What would the mother of a young family, living in a tied cottage, think of that phrase "redeemed from all amenities"? And we know how much country people are interested in the element of picturesqueness, or indeed in any aesthetic considerations whatever. The depressing thing is, that, give these people opportunities to break out of that centuries-old isolation, and they at once choose to go to the "pictures" and the cheap bazaar in the nearest market-town, where they can buy standardised emotions, ideas and household articles, which they strongly prefer to the home-made and idiosyncratic. It is these last, now being so rapidly thrown out on the dump of civilisation, that Mr. Bensusan is salvaging in his collection of books. He preserves his treasures in the form of short stories and character sketches, many of which he has read over the radio. He has an ear for dialect and idiom, comparable to that shown so exquisitely by the Somerset writer Walter Raymond. "'There's naught amiss along o' me,'" says one "short, stout, red-cheeked, sloe-eyed, smiling woman, 'but me pore Dick's wunnerful sadly. He ain't hisself nit by any means. I tell him he oughter let me go ast Doctor Guiver f'r a bottle, but he don't howd wi' doctors. He should say they muddle ye up.'" The lilt, the rhythm, are convincing. So, too, is his characterisation of those Essex worthies. There they are, in all their guile, their bland cunning, their subtle stupidity; thoroughly likeable the more one learns to know them; if they ever can be known. Mr. Bensusan has spent a long life at the lesson, and he is still extremely cautious.

As a relief from this hard lesson, he turns to his woodland friends, the trees and their warm-blooded inhabitants. In his little book on trees he has collected a mass of legends about them, tales that have contributed an arboreal element to "beliefs, superstition, religion and folklore." The intricacies of these fancies are comparatively simple after the human story.

Richard Church

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

Stravinsky: *Symphony in Three Movements* (P.S.O. of New York cond. Stravinsky. Col. LX1042-4). If you can stand a whole symphony in which all suggestion of *cantabile* is anxiously avoided; where the strings are continuously subordinated to the wind and brass; and where a piano scuffles about in the middle of the harmony like a boy on stilts: then, no doubt, you will derive pleasure from this bitter, heartless work. In any case, there is plenty to admire in the extraordinary inventions of sonority. The whole score is a masterpiece of perverse ingenuity, of succinct, logical argument from given premisses. Like some of Picasso's recent paintings, this symphony is clearly intended to convince rather than to enchant. The performance interprets a very "white" score with poker-faced vigour and integrity. The recording proceeds at a very high level and is rather acid; but it keeps a clever balance.

Debussy: *Printemps—Symphonic Suite* (R.P.O. cond. Beecham. H.M.V. DB6549-50). Very early Debussy (1886). Recklessly luscious, in a *fin-de-siècle* manner that reminds us irresistibly of Delius; but the piece has a good deal more distinction and genuine poetic feeling than it has been given credit for in some quarters. One glimpses *L'Après-midi* (though not *Pelléas*) on the horizon. With less genius, Debussy might easily have gone on from here straight into the d'Indy school, and ended up on the level of Florent Schmitt. The orchestra plays *con amore,* and the elaborate texture is very clearly reproduced by a recording that takes no risks. Recommended especially to those who prefer very easy listening.

Wagner: *A Faust Overture* and *Ride of the Valkyries* (N.B.C. Orch. cond. Toscanini. H.M.V. DB6545-6). Toscanini takes infinite pains to bring out the tragic intensity and twy-mindedness of this very dramatic overture. As it were a portrait, by Delacroix, of the Flying Dutchman. Of course, not a note out of place. Strings magnificent. Recording air: no overloading, but some detail lost and not (by English standards) quite enough bass. The *Ride* squeezes itself through the mike without getting too much tattered on the way; but the lower brass at the end is insufficiently heavy to make the right impression.

Rimsky-Korsakoff: *Capriccio Espagnol* (Danish

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THE PHAIDON
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State Radio Symphony Orch. cond. Malko. H.M.V. C3686-7). An orchestral *tour de force,* carried out with immense gusto and a fine sense of colour. Far more Russian than Spanish, in spite of genuine Spanish tunes used. Performance highly picturesque, but with no tendency to slop over. Nasal, "gypsy" quality adopted by the solo violin very effective. Recording a bit metallic, but very consistent in tone. How the last few pages of the Finale manage to come through without distortion, I should not like to guess; but they do. A new set of this inspiriting fantasia was needed; now we shall not want another for some time, thank you.

BORODIN: *On the Steppes of Central Asia* (Philharmonia Orch. cond. Lambert. Col. DX1449). A beautifully scored exercise in the sectional deployment of a single, wistfully monotonous tune. To the conductor this piece should present no difficulty, beyond the care required (and here employed) to manage the delicate transitions of colour. An excellent issue.

VIEUXTEMPS: *Concerto No. 5 in A minor* (Heifetz with L.S.O. cond. Sargent; H.M.V. DB6547-8). A display piece of little inherent musical interest; but Heifetz's execution is of the very first order. Taut and glittering tone from low G to the top of the register. Beautiful phrasing. Recording good, but some overloading at centre of disc.

STRAUSS: *Oboe Concerto* (Léon Goossens, with Philharmonia Orch. cond. Galliera. Col. DX1444-6). Strauss is still, in his eighties, the greatest manipulator of notes alive, and his Oboe Concerto, composed during the late war, is the typical product of an Indian Summer: warm, lamp-lit, redolent of a past more gracious that the present. The recording leaves a good deal to be desired. Léon Goossens' oboe, miraculously played, yet sounds sour; and the orchestral tone is not glowing enough, nor at all comfortable. Some blame must also, I think, be laid at Signor Galliera's door. His beat is much too emphatic, as if he were conducting in a bandstand. I miss the intimate, elegant, Viennese quality of the work. Recommended with caution, though it seems very unlikely that we shall have another issue of this work for many a year.

HAYDN: *String Quartet in C, op.* 33, *No.* 3 (Griller Quartet, Decca K1668-9). A good average recording, though not equal to that of the Haydn quartet reviewed in my last Notes. First violin edgy. Scherzando movement taken too fast: this tempo, and the rather tentative bowing, do away with the glow implied by the exceptionally low *tessitura* of the melody. The old recording, in Volume I of the Haydn Quartet Society, seems to me still preferable, if you happen to possess it.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in E flat, op.* 31, *No.* 3 (Claudio Arrau. Col. LX1039-41). After the first movement, this sonata is second-rate Beethoven; but Claudio Arrau gives a fine, thoughtful, carefully balanced account of it. Recording faithful and resonant.

CHOPIN: *Ballade No. 2 in F major* (Moiseiwitsch. H.M.V. C3685). Chiefly because of its programmatic nature, which is responsible for an impossibly contrasted layout, this Ballade remains perhaps the least satisfactory of the four. It says much for Moiseiwitsch's artistry that he has been able, on this disc, to prevent the work from falling to bits. His playing is delicate and fiery, and the recording is excellent.

SCHUBERT: *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* (Margaret Ritchie acc. Gerald Moore with Reginald Kell, Clarinet. H.M.V. C3688). Miss Ritchie's singing of this delightful song (it is to all intents and purposes an operatic aria) is very nearly as good as Elisabeth Schumann's—and that is saying a great deal. There is probably not another soprano in England who can manage the florid, lyrical style with perfect accuracy and purity of intonation. Mr. Kell's obligato is deftly and sensitively—perhaps a shade sentimentally—played. Recording falls off badly in the *cabaletta* (end of side 2). It ought not to be impossible to prevent Miss Ritchie's high notes from distorting like this.

ELGAR: "The Sun goeth Down" (*The Kingdom*) (Isobel Baillie, with Philharmonia Orch. cond. Sargent. Col. DX1443). A recording of this beautiful and passionate meditations has long been a felt need. It shows precisely what Elgar might have done in the sphere of opera. Miss Baillie sings with real feeling and admirable style, but I'm afraid the recording is horrible and does no justice to her voice.

BIZET: *Micaela's Song* (*Carmen*); CHARPENTIER: "Depuis le Jour" (*Louise*) (Eleanor Steber, with Philharmonia Orch. cond. Süsskind. H.M.V. DB6514). The best available record of Micaela's cavatina. Miss Steber's voice is powerful and of good quality, but imperfectly controlled and steady only on the highest notes, which are excellent. Orchestra and balance exceptionally good, but some distortion of the voice, especially in the *Louise* aria.

MONTEVERDI-RESPIGHI: *Lamento d'Arianna* (Gabriella Gatti, with L.S.O. cond. Bellezza. H.M.V. DB6515). There is no reason, that I can see, for tarting up one of Monteverdi's finest and most characteristic strokes of genius, so as to resemble a rejected number from *Madame Butterfly*. May this beastly travesty lie heavy on the grave of a fine musician who ought to have known better. Signora Gatti sings, however, magnificently, and the recording is good.

MOZART: "Dove sono" (*Figaro*) (Maria Cebotari, with Philharmonia Orch. cond. Krips. H.M.V. DA1875). Perhaps no living soprano can sing this aria with the pure legato implied by the voice line; but that is no excuse for the vulgar *espressivo* with which Mme Cebotari wobbles her way through the recitative and the later passages of the aria itself. When she does not press, her voice is agreeable enough; but that is seldom the case.

EDUCATIONAL RECORDINGS: A further series of School Choirs, in Part Songs, Madrigals, etc. (H.M.V. C3676-83). Chiefly younger children (7 to 11) this time. The sounds emitted by these tots are in a class by themselves: they have the charm and beauty of larks and robins, which, together with a wholly human enthusiasm, makes an irresistible combination. I vehemently urge everyone to acquire one or more of these delightful and well-made records, especially C3676, containing a Tyrolean, a Russian, and an Italian folk song which the children sing with an artless conviction that astonishes and delights. Other records contain examples of Bach, Weelkes, and Peter Warlock, as well as many folk songs of various kinds.

INSTRUMENTS OF THE ORCHESTRA: Recorded under the direction of Sir Malcolm Sargent (H.M.V. C3619-22). I cannot think this set well planned. A series of virtuoso passages for solo instruments, often with piano accompaniment, may be entertaining to listen to; but for purposes of education it would surely have been more useful to let us hear each instrument play, first a simple, slow scale, from top to bottom of its register, and then some important passage in an orchestral context. Benjamin Britten's *Young Person's Guide* seems to me a good deal more instructive than this set, despite the leaflets and charts with which it is lavishly provided.

I must apologise for referring, in my last Notes, to the previous recording of Ravel's *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée* as being by Pierre Bernac. It was Martial Singher who first recorded these songs.

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Report by Roger Marvell

Such experience as I have of Public Schools suggests to me that nobody should teach in one who has not spent some time in a less restricted world; and a man coming from outside to be headmaster might be expected to notice and to abolish absurdities and wickednesses in the traditional system to which the average headmaster is seemingly blind. On the other hand, the notion that a headmaster should in the first place be an administrator betrays a barbarous confusion between means and ends. I was careful to ask for comments not upon the recent appointment to Rugby but upon a hypothetical appointment of a similar sort in the past; and the harsh views attributed to the illustrious quartet reflect, therefore, the prejudices of their time and not my opinion. I recommend two guineas each for R. J. P. Hewison and L. E. J.; one guinea each for J. C. B. Date and Peebee. I adjoin a selection from the other entries.

DR. JOHNSON

Why, Sir (laughing), let him but flog soundly, and he shall do well enough, compensating in ferocity for want of learning, like any other schoolmaster—or Scotchman.

DR. ARNOLD

If he is not a gentleman and a Christian, all is lost. If he is, he has everything, save the authority of Orders, required to continue my work.

QUEEN VICTORIA

The Queen is MUCH surprised and distressed. Not only is the appointment *peculiar*—if more such were made she would not know where to turn for Bishops.

OSCAR WILDE

It must fail. He will have so little to learn from his pupils.

R. J. P. HEWISON

DR. JOHNSON

Why, Sir, an Attorney may be a very good sort of man, but you are not to govern boys with writs of *certiorari*.

DR. ARNOLD

However pure his life, a man without Greek is unfitted to instruct boys in Christian principles, and must lack that firmness of mind which familiarity with the Classics alone begets.

QUEEN VICTORIA

The Queen hears that the new headmaster's wife is an excellent and ladylike person, which is so *necessary* in a Public School, and She cannot forget that *he* once visited Rugby.

OSCAR WILDE

Headmasters fatigue me, dear Boy—the obsolescent misleading the adolescent. But I applaud the appointment. One cannot be too early instructed in the art of consulting one's solicitor.

L. E. J.

DR. JOHNSON

Why, Sir, if he knows his Latin verbs, it will be well enough. I daresay he will whip them as soundly as another.

DR. ARNOLD

. . . but I am deeply concerned to learn that he has been selected not for his nobility of character or devotion to Christian principles, but for his business ability.

QUEEN VICTORIA

The Queen feels sure his influence will be much more *wholesome* for the boys than that of a schoolmaster, some of whom unfortunately bore very *advanced* and even *dangerous* opinions.

OSCAR WILDE

I suppose it will be a shock to him. Boys are so much more vicious than criminals.

J. C. B. DATE

DR. JOHNSON

Why, Sir, it is most proper. I would not *coddle* children. I would intrude upon them in their tender years such unsavoury characters that they may be the sooner forewarned.

DR. ARNOLD

If a thorough English gentleman—Christian, manly and enlightened—with a deep sense of moral evil and a belief in the prefectorial system, I think God may overlook his past.

QUEEN VICTORIA

Mr. G. came to tell me to-day that I should appoint a solicitor to Rugby. I replied at once that Mr. D. never would have *asked* such a thing!

OSCAR WILDE

Excellent. Everyone knows the difference between right and wrong; what one needs to learn is when a jury will not convict and when it will.

PEEBEE

DR. JOHNSON

JOHNSON: Sir, they'll create me admiral next.
BOSWELL: Yet you might succeed in time.
JOHNSON: Aye, in time, when I have forgot my old trade and learned a new at the navy's expense.

JOYCE TAYLOR

As soon set a pickpocket to teach children as a lawyer: a rogue so trained in the distorting of truth is hardly fit company for his fellow-men, let alone innocent children.

JACK BRADSTREET

Why, Sir, if any man not driven by necessity turns pedagogue, it is because he has a mind to it. He will do as well as another.

C. M. GROSETT

Sir, he has exchanged one noble profession for another. But now he must address himself to *fundamentals.* I mean, Sir [checking me with a serious look] he must now be his own judge and executioner.

ALFRED JOWETT

Sir, how can they who sell their wits to the confounding of justice profess to teach that justice is not to be bought?

CHARLES BARRATT

Since one of the chief purposes of these institutions is to lighten the purses of unfortunate parents, I can imagine, Sir, nobody better qualified for this office than an Attorney.

W. H. G. PRICE

Men cannot commonly succeed in two different directions. An attorney aims to sway opinion by argument, a schoolmaster to establish principles by edification.

PIBWOB

DR. ARNOLD

A schoolmaster should be a Christian and a gentleman. I see no need for lawyers. I believe my boys.

C. S. COOK

See St. Luke, XI, 52:
(Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.)

VERONICA SIBTHORP

QUEEN VICTORIA

Though ourselves preferring a soldier, we think that dear Albert might not have objected to the lawyer. Will not the new headmaster take Holy Orders to avoid contention?

DERICK

We would be content to remain in that state to which Providence has called us. I was called to the Throne, and I have never desired to change my condition.

WILLIAM BLISS

OSCAR WILDE

Let us welcome even so mild a progression. If we cannot hope for fewer criminals, at least we shall have fewer convicts. The saving in public money should be immense.

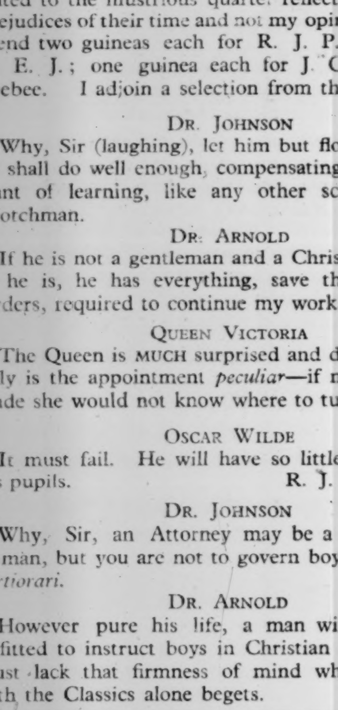
JACK BRADSTREET

Ah, well—I hope he teaches them to do better in court than I did. . . .

FERGIE

Boys are nine-tenths barbarian. Let their bullying exhaust itself against a greater bully, their low cunning before a cunning lower still, and you give them every chance to educate themselves.

S. W. HYDE



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Appointments Vacant

None of the vacancies in these columns relates to a man between 18 and 50 inclusive or a woman between 18 and 40 inclusive unless he or she is excepted from the provision of the Control of Engagement Order, 1947, or the vacancy is for employment excepted from the provision of that Order.

UNIVERSITY of Wales. Univ. College of N. Wales, Bangor. The Council will shortly appoint a Professor of Latin with effect from Oct. 1, 1948. Salary £1,450 p.a. plus superann. Applics. should be lodged with Glyn Roberts, Secy. & Registrar, from whom further partics. may be obtained, by March 20, 1948.

UNIVERSITY of South Africa (External Division), Pretoria. Applics. invited for Senior Lecturer in English. Successful applicant must be prepared to provide tuition to external students by correspondence and such other means as are prescribed by the University. Sal. £600 × £25—£900 p.a., plus a temporary cost of living allowance amounting at the moment to £140 p.a. in case of a married man and £40 for others. Membership of the University Teachers' Provident Fund is compulsory. Allowance made for travelling expenses. Further partics. may be obtained from Secretary, Universities Bureau of the British Empire, 8 Park St. W.1. Closing date for receipt of applics. by Universities Bureau is Feb. 29, and by the Director of External Studies, P.O. Box 392, Pretoria, March 15. Applics. accompanied by certified copies of academic qualifics., testimonials and a medical certificate must be forwarded to the Secretary, Universities Bureau, London, and duplicates to the Director, Pretoria.

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THREE Counties Mental Hospital, Arlesey, Beds. Applics. invited for post of Psychiatric Social Worker (2 vacancies) for work in connection with mental hospital and three out-patient clinics. Candidates must hold Cert. of Mental Health Course of London School of Economics. Salary according to exp. within scale of £370-£20-£530, but a candidate with exceptional qualifics. and exp. may be paid an additional £75 p.a. Resident or non-resident accomm. available. A full-time secretary is attached to Social Service Dept. Car available shortly or mileage allowance, if pref., according to County Scale. Applics., stating age and with partics. of exp., etc., to be sent to Medical Superintendent as soon as possible.

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CITY of Leicester. Museum and Art Gallery. Applics. invited for post of Assistant Archivist. Appointment will be made subject to the conditions of the National Joint Council Scheme of Conditions of Service, and to the provisions of the Local Govt. Officers' Superann. Acts. Salary scale will be in accordance with A.P.T. Division, Grade II (£360 × £15—£405 plus cost of living bonus, at present £59 16s. p.a. for men and £48 2s. p.a. for women). Applicants should hold an appropriate university degree, and have special knowledge of archives work. Applics., stating age, qualifics. and exp., must reach M. B. Hodge, Director, Museum and Art Gallery, New Walk, Leicester, by Feb. 21, 1948, and must be accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials. Envelopes enclg. applics. must be endorsed "Assistant Archivist."

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